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World Baha'i Institute in New York

Nima Yadollahpour

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Next comes that valley words cannot express,
The Vale of Poverty and Nothingness:
Here you are lame and deaf, the mind has gone
You enter an obscure oblivion.
When sunlight penetrates the atmosphere
A hundred thousand shadows disappear,
And when the sea arises what can save
The patterns on the surface of each wave?
The two worlds are those patterns, and in vain
Men tell themselves what passes will remain.
Whoever sinks within this sea is blest
And in self-loss obtains eternal rest;
The heart that would be lost in this wide sea
Disperses in profound tranquility,
And if it should emerge again it knows
The secret ways in which the world arose.
The pilgrim who has grown wise in the Quest,
The sufi who has weathered every test,
Are lost when they approach this painful place,
And other men leave not a single trace;
Because all disappear, you might believe
That all are equal (just as you perceive
That twigs and incense offered to a flame
Both turn to powdered ash and look the same).
But though they seem to share a common state,
Their inward essences are separate,
And evil souls sunk in this mighty sea
Retain unchanged their base identity;
But if a pure soul sinks the waves surround
His fading form, in beauty he is drowned-
He is not, yet he is: what could this mean?
It is a state the mind has never seen.

One night that sea of secrets, that loved seer
Of Tous, said to a pupil standing near:
"When you are worn out by love's fierce despair
And in your weakness tremble like a hair,
You will become that hair and take your place
In curls that cluster round the loved one's face-
Whoever wastes away for love is made
A hair concealed within those tresses' shade-
But if you will not waste away, your soul
Has made the seven gates of hell its goal."

A frenzied lover wept; a passer-by
Inquired the cause, and this was his reply:
"They say that when at last the Lord appears,
He will receive, for forty thousand years,
The men who are deserving in this place;
Then from that summit of celestial grace
They will return and know themselves once more
Bereft of light, the poorest of the poor.
I will be shown myself - I weep to think
That from such heights to such depths I must sink
I have no need of my identity-
I long for death; what use is 'I' to me?
I live with evil while my Self is here;
With God both Self and evil disappear.
When I escape the Self I will arise
And be as God; the yearning pilgrim flies
From this dark province of mortality
To Nothingness and to Eternity.
And though, my heart, you bid the world farewell
To cross the bridge that arches over hell,
Do not despair - think of the oil-lamp's glow
That sends up smoke as black as any crow;
Its oil is changed and what was there before
The shining flame flared up exists no more.
So you, my quaking heart, when you endure
These threatening flames, will rise up rare and

First put aside the Self, and then prepare
To mount Boraq and journey through the air;
Drink down the cup of Nothingness; put on
The cloak that signifies oblivion-
Your stirrup is the void; absence must be
The horse that bears you into vacancy.
Destroy the body and adorn your sight
With kohl of insubstantial, darkest night.
First lose yourself, then lose this loss and then
Withdraw from all that you have lost again-
Go peacefully, and stage by stage progress
Until you gain the realms of Nothingness;
But if you cling to any worldly trace,
No news will reach you from that promised place

THE WORLD BAHAI INSTITUTE IN NEW YORK
Nima Yadollahpour Thesis 97/98 Prof. Bijan Youssefzadeh

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 And in self-loss obtains eternal rest.
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 Dispenses in profound tranquillity,
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 So you, my quaking heart, when you endure
 These threatening flames, will rise up rare and pure.

 First put aside the Self, and then prepare
 To mount Buraq and journey through the air.
 Drink down the cup of Nothingness; put on
 The cloak that signifies oblivion.
 Your stimulus is the void; absence must be
 The horse that bears you into vacancy.
 Destroy the body and adorn your sight
 With kabl of insubstantial, dawning night.
 First lose yourself, then lose this loss and then
 Withdraw from all that you have lost again.
 Go peacefully, and stage by stage progress
 Until you gain the realm of Nothingness;
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Thesis Statement

The goal of this project is to understand and comprehend the philosophy of the Baha'i Faith and its literature. From this knowledge, I hope to investigate the issue of transforming a specific Baha'i text into an architectural form. At this point, my job is not only to be an architect but also a translator. To be able to create an architectural language, which is a derivative of the philosophy and the writings of the Baha'i Faith.

The piece of literature which I have chosen based on considerable research and understanding of the Faith, is the *Seven Valleys of Baha'u'llah*. This text in actuality is a letter written at a very important time of the commencement of the Baha'i Faith. It was written by Baha'u'llah, the Founder/Prophet of the Faith, and its text was considerably influenced by sufi thought and mysticism. The dominating centerpiece of His letter, as its primary vehicle of expression uses the metaphor of the *Seven Valleys* found in Faridu'D-Din Attar's most famous work, *The Conference of the Birds*. The thesis uses the original text by Attar for the design of the Institute.

In this, the issues of light, color, texture, and interior spatial relationships, become very important tools of translating the Baha'i spiritual literature into architectural spaces.

"Just as the dimension of the soul is depth, not breadth, so the dimensions of an interior may well exist below or above the physical limits of its geometry." Steven Holl

At a larger scale, in terms of the city, this project begins to explore the issue of the city edge. To investigate the possibility of creating space, where city and the natural landscape overlap and create a boundary or a membrane. The objective is to create space, not an object, where the building/space becomes the mediator between the city and the water. Again, at this level the building becomes a lexicon, acting as the translator between city and nature.

There is a need to explore the possibilities of the city edge, where the land has become left over space, residual, with no form of use, hierarchy or mediation between the two worlds of the metropolitan city and the natural landscape. This will be the opportunity to develop strategies to transform these types of spaces and revitalize them. These spaces could act as the visions into the future growth and expansion of the city.

Currently the only existence of an edge, are the major highways which occupy this transitional slice of land, the West Side Highway on the western boundary of Manhattan Island, and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive, which serves as the major transportation root on the eastern boundary.

Project Topic

The title of this project is The World Baha'i Institute in New York. This title, I believe clearly and concisely states the program and the site.

The location and program of this project is very important. The site is located on the water's edge, along the Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive, stretching perpendicularly across five blocks of Midtown Manhattan. Specifically between 35th and 39th streets, only three blocks to the south of the United Nations. The worldwide Baha'i community manages its relations with the outside world through the offices of the Baha'i International Community. The immediate proximity to the United Nations, represents the history of the relations between the Baha'i Faith and the United Nations.

Some of the history involves a number of World Peace conferences at the United Nations, which have been organized and led by the Baha'is from all over the world. Therefore, this Institute will house the offices involved with the United Nations, and other organizations.

However, besides the presence of these offices, other important programmatic elements are also included to complete the functions of this Institute. The building's most important function is to be a learning center, which through spatial and programmatic experience, will engage the occupier, and teach of the history and the ideology of the Baha'i Faith. Therefore along with administrative elements, a library, learning center and classrooms are also included in the Institute.

The final element which compositionally and sequentially unites the building, is the memorial which commemorates the tens of thousands of Baha'is who have been executed through persecution during the 150 year history of the Baha'i Faith. These series of spaces also include spaces of contemplation for prayer and detachment.

THE

BAHA'I

FAITH

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Background on the Baha'i Faith

Bab:

The origins of the Baha'i Faith go back to a religious movement founded in AD 1844 by a young Iranian merchant, Sayyid Ali Muhammad Shirazi (1819-1850), who took the title of the Bab (the Gate). His followers were therefore called Babis. In 1844, in Shiraz in the south of Iran, the Bab gathered around himself a group of eighteen disciples whom he named the "Letters of the Living". The Bab dispersed the Letters of the Living throughout Iran and surrounding countries to spread his message, while he himself set off on the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1844.

After his announcement of his message, for the most part he was generally ignored. But despite these early setbacks, the message of the Bab spread throughout Iran. Thousands became followers, including many religious scholars of Islam.

In the Muslim religion there is a belief that exactly 1000 years after the 11th Imam, or desiple of Mohammad, the 12th Imam will arrive to create the transition between the old religion and a new revelation. The cycle of the 11 Imams, was exactly 260 years, and on the Islamic year of 1260 the 12th, or the "Hidden Imam", was introduced as the Bab.

However, there was an opposition on this movement by the Shi'ite leaders of the Persian government. From then, Bab was imprisoned. During the time of his imprisonment, he wrote the "Babayan". This described the advent of the "Manifestation of God who was to come after Him.". This identity was a crucial factor in the Bab's teaching and especially in the development of the future Baha'i movement. The purpose of the Bab was to provide the way for Baha'u'llah's revelation.

The Bab was tortured and efforts were made to confice him to abandon his mission, and thousands of his followers were persecuted.

In 1850, the new Shah of Iran decided that the only way of stopping this religious movement would be to execute the founder. They therefore had the bab brought to Tabriz and suspended in a public square n front of a firing squad, he was martyred. This however, did not stop the persecutions of the Babis. Thousands more were tortured and killed in the next few years.

Baha'u'llah:

In 1863, after constant conflict and persecution of the Babis, Husayn Ali Nuri, the son of a prominent Iranian nobleman, assumed leadership of the Babis, and proclaimed himself as "Baha'u'llah" (the splendor of God). Baha'u'llah being the founder of the Baha'i Faith, was born in Tehran on the 12th of November in the year 1817. In the first year of the Bab's mission, 1844, Baha'u'llah became an enthusiastic supporter of the new teachings. When the Babis began to be persecuted, Baha'u'llah also suffered and wsa arrested several times and beaten. In 1852, he wsa arrested and thrown into an underground pit called the Siyah Chal.

It was during this time in the Siyah Chal when a visionary experienced occured to him which marks the start of his mission. This occurance in the Baha'i Faith is seen as equivalent to the Burning Bush, to the Dove that descended upon Jesus, to the enlightenment of the Buddha under the Bo tree, and to the first appearance of the Angel Gabriel to Muhammad.

The Vision of Baha'u'llah in the Siyah Chal

While engulfed in tribulations I heard a most wondrous, a most sweet voice, calling above My head. Turning My face, I beheld a Maiden--the embodiment of the remembrance of the name of My Lord--suspended in the air before Me. So rejoiced was she in her very soul that her countenance shone with the ornament of the good pleasurer of God, and her cheeks glowed with the brightness of the All-Merciful. Betwixt earth and heaven she was raising a call which captivated the hearts and minds of men. She was imparting to both My inward and outer being tidings which rejoiced My soul, and the souls of God's honoured servants. Pointing with her finger unto My head, she addressed all who are in heaven and all who are on earth, saying: 'By God! This is the Best-Beloved of the worlds, and yet ye comprehend not. This is the Beauty of God amongst you, and the power of His sovereignty within you, could ye but understand. This is the Mystery of God and His Treasure, the Cause of God and His glory unto all who are in the kingdoms of Revelation and of creation, if ye be of them that perceive.' (Quoted in Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, pp.101-2)

Although most of the Babi prisoners in the Siyah Chal were executed, Bah'u'llah's life was spared because of his high social position. Shortly after, Baha'u'llah was released from imprisonment on the condition that he would go into exile. The choice was offered for him to go to Russian territory, but he preferred to go to Baghdad.

In Baghdad, Baha'u'llah proceeded to revitalize the Babi community. For two years between 1854 and 1856, he withdrew to the mountains of Kurdistan. Here he explored, and studied mystical themes. He was a guest in a Sufi retreat, and after his return to Baghdad, he maintained his contact with some of these Sufis. His two main mystical works, the Seven Valleys and the Four Valleys, were written to two Sufi leaders of this time.

The Iranian authorities made representations to the Ottoman government about the presence and increasing influence of Baha'u'llah in Baghdad, close to the Iranian border. Orders eventually came that Baha'u'llah was to go to Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire.

His exile in Istanbul was short however, after three months he was sent to Edirn (Adrianople) in European Turkey. It was here where Baha'u'llah openly announce his claim to be the one foretold by the Bab and the inaugurator of a new religious beginning. He sent his followers to Iran to publicize this claim among the Babis, almost all of whom are now Baha'is.

In 1867, orders came that Baha'u'llah and his companions were to leave Edirne. They were taken to Gallipoli and put aboard a ship. Eventually they arrived in the prison-city of Akka in Palestine.

In Akka, Baha'u'llah was at first imprisoned in the citadel for two years, but when that building was required for other purposes, he was placed in a succession of houses in the city under house arrest. It was in these circumstances that Baha'u'llah wrote his most important book, the Kitab-i-Aqdas (the Most Holy Book), in which he outlined his main religious laws. This was followed in the next two decades by a series of writings (tablets as they are called by the Baha'is) in which he gave the distinctive teachings of his religious dispensation.

In 1877, Baha'u'llah was finally allowed to move outside the city walls, and in 1879, he took up residence in the mansion of Bahji just outside of Akka.

The last years of Baha'u'llah's life were spent in writing and dictating numerous works; receiving the pilgrims that came in increasing numbers; and directing the affairs of his religion. The religion itself was now gradually spreading into Egypt, Anatolia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and India. Even in Iran, despite episodes of persecution from time to time, the religion was spreading among all classes and in all parts of the country.

Baha'u'llah passed away on the 29th of May in 1892 in the mansion of Bahji and was buried in a nearby house. He was seventy-four years of age and had spent forty of those years as a prisoner and in exile. His shrine is regarded by the Baha'is as the holiest place on earth.

Abdu'l-Baha:

Before his passing, Baha'u'llah appointed his eldest son Abdu'l-Baha, as the leader of the Baha'i community, and the sole authorised interpreter of his writings. Abdu'l-Baha whose given name was Abbas, was born in Tehran on May 23rd in 1844, the same day in the same year that the Bab began his mission.

During the early years of Abdu'l-Baha's ministry, the Baha'i Faith was taken to North America. By the turn of the twentieth century, there was a community of several thousand Baha'is in North America. Some small groups also arose in Europe. This turning point in the Baha'i Faith demonstrated that the Faith was capable of appealing to people outside the cultural world of the Middle East to which it had been confined up to that point in time. After he was freed in 1908, Abdu'l-Baha moved to Egypt for a while before setting off on the first of two journeys to the West. In the first journey in 1911, Abdu'l-Baha visited France and England. Then in 1912-13, he visited North America, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Hungary. He spoke on many of the issues of that time: peace, women's rights, racial equality and other matters.

Finally in 1913, Abdu'l-Baha returned to Haifa a year before the first World War. During these war years, Abdu'l-Baha wrote the Tablets of the Divine Plan, laying down his instruction for the world-wide spread of the Baha'i Faith.

Abdu'l-Baha passed away on November 28th, 1921, and was buried in one of the rooms of the shrine of the Bab.

Baha'i Beliefs and Teachings

The Baha'i Faith is a global religion followed by millions of Baha'is from virtually every country on earth. The teachings of Baha'u'llah, the Prophet-Founder of the Baha'i Faith, unite men and women of various religious, ethnic, national and class origins into one diverse community working to promote the unity of humankind and the establishment of peace in the world. Baha'u'llah's vision for global peace and unity is practised today within Baha'i Communities throughout the world.

Baha'is perceive a common thread underlying all religion, implying an essential universal message which forms the basis of all religions. Each successive religion, carries a progressive unfolding message, and each new one draws from and revitalizes those of the past.

Baha'is believe in one God and that knowledge of God is attained through the Divine Manifestations. Baha'is compare the Manifestations to a mirror, when held to the sun, a mirror reflects its light, therefore the Manifestations "reflect" the light, wisdom, and knowledge of God.

Every few centuries a great Divine Revealer--a Krishna, a Zoroaster, a Moses, a Jesus, a Muhammed--appear in the East, like a spiritual sun, to illumine the likened minds of men and awaken their dormant souls...

Baha'is believe that Baha'u'llah is the Manifestation of God for this age, and Baha'u'llah was universal in his religious scope; therefore all the Holy writings of the world's religions are also held sacred.

Principles of the Baha'i Faith:

- The oneness of the world and humanity.
- The protection and guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- The foundation of all religions as one.
- Religion must be the cause of unity.
- Religion must accord with science and reason.
- Independent investigation of truth.
- Equality between men and women.
- The abandoning of all prejudices among mankind.
- Universal peace.
- Universal education.
- A universal language.
- Solution of the economic problem.
- An international tribunal.

Laws of Baha'u'llah:

- Obligation of daily prayer.
- An annual fasting period of 19 days.
- Prohibition of use of alcoholic liquor or drugs.
- Monogamy.
- Marriage contingent upon the consent of all four parents.
- Obedience to civil government.
- Obligation to engage in useful trade, art or profession.
- Prohibition of a clergy in the Baha'i Faith.

Importance of Numbers and Rituals/Symbols



Number 9:

A simple nine-pointed star is generally used by Baha'is as a symbol of the Faith. The number nine has a significance in the Baha'i Revelation. Nine years after the announcement of the Bab in Shiraz, Baha'u'llah received the intimation of His mission in the dungeon in Tehran (Siyah Chal). Nine, as the highest single-digit number, symbolizes completeness and fulfillment. Since the Baha'i Faith claims to be the fulfillment of the expectations of all prior religions, this symbol, as used for example in nine-sided Baha'i temples, reflects that sense of fulfillment and completeness. There are also nine doors at the House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois, and the other Baha'i temples. Each of these doors also represent one of the nine great world religions.

- 1- Ancient religions
- 2- Hinduism
- 3- Zoroastrian
- 4- Buddhism
- 5- Judaism
- 6- Christianity
- 7- Islam
- 8- Babi
- 9- Baha'i

Of particular sacred significance to Baha'is are calligraphic forms of the word Baha (Arabic for "Glory"), known as the Greatest Name, a reference to Baha'u'llah. In this category is the symbol of the nine pointed star with this calligraphy imprinted on it, which is engraved on personal rings and on buildings to establish their Baha'i identity.

The number nine is also derived from the name or the word Baha, which according to Persian Abjad counting adds up to the number nine. Which also is representative of perfection (as the highest unit) and the numerical equivalent of the name Baha:

$$\text{Baha} \text{ ————— } B(2) + A(1) + H(5) + A(1) = 9$$

Another calligraphic form of the Greatest Name involves an invocation in Arabic Ya Bah'u'l-Abha which says: "O Glory of the All Glorious." It is displayed in Baha'i homes and places of Baha'i activity.

Also "Nine" registered, declared Baha'is, are required to establish a local spiritual assembly.

Number 19:

The meaning of the number "nineteen" is vague, even though it occurs frequently in the Baha'i calendar. Not only is there a nineteen day fast, but a Baha'i month consists of nineteen days. It has its origin, perhaps, in Persian numerology. The significance of the numbers may be ascertained individually; 1=unity, and 9=fulfillment, therefore 19 represents a combination of the two and has a spiritual meaning for the unity and fulfillment of religions as found in the Baha'i Faith. Also another explanation for the importance of the number 19 is the "Letters of the Living", which the Bab named after his 18 disciples, including himself as the 19th.

The Baha'i year consists of 19 months of 19 days each (i.e. 361 days), with the addition of certain "Intercalary Days" between the 18th and 19th months in order to adjust the calendar to the solar year. The Bab named the months after the attributes of God. The Baha'i New Year, like the ancient Persian New Year, is astronomically fixed, commencing at the March equinox (March 21), which is the first day of Spring.

Baha'i Persecutions in Iran

The crime was, in the eyes of the assassins, their religion, or Faith in a God. To be Baha'is. In fact this persecution record dates back to the mid 1800's when the Faith began by the movement of the Bab. Since then Baha'is of Iran have been persecuted, tens of thousands have been martyred, imprisoned, tortured, or denied of jobs, pensions, businesses, and educational opportunities. All national Baha'i administrative structures have been banned by the government of Iran, and holy places, shrines, and cemeteries have been confiscated, vandalized or destroyed.

The 350,000 member Baha'i community in Iran, makes up the largest religious minority, and Baha'is have been oppressed solely because of this religious hatred. Islamic fundamentalists in Iran and elsewhere, have since the beginning, viewed the Baha'i Faith as a threat to Islam and have branded the Baha'is as heretics.

The more than 300,000 Baha'is living in Iran are the frequent victims of beatings, imprisonment, property confiscation, persecution and harassment, according to the United Nations and Human Rights watch reports. They are forbidden to practice their religion and to attend schools and are pressured to become Muslims. More than 200 were executed when the Ayatollah Khomeini took power in 1979.

Iran's Muslim government has a long history of persecuting Baha'is. After the execution of the Bab in front of a firing squad, another 20,000 of his followers were executed over the next few years.



The Universal House of Justice, the United Nations and the Faith

Universal House of Justice:

Since its establishment in 1963, the Universal House of Justice has been the highest authority in the Baha'i world. It directs the affairs of the Baha'i Faith at the international level and provides guidance and co-ordination for the activities of the various National Spiritual Assemblies.

The Universal House of Justice has launched successive plans for the spread and consolidation of Baha'i communities around the world. In broad outline these plans have included the tasks of:

- spreading the Baha'i Faith to all parts of the globe.
- establishing and improving the functioning of the Baha'i administrative order in all parts of the world.
- encouraging the individual spiritual development of all Baha'is as well as their universal participation in all aspects of Baha'i community life.
- improving the qualitative aspects of Baha'i community and family life, especially through a wider extension of Baha'i education.
- promoting the greater involvement of the Baha'is in the life of human society.
- increasing worldwide the translation, production, distribution and use of Baha'i literature.
- proclaiming the message of Baha'u'llah to all parts of society and minority groups.
- developing the Baha'i world centre as the spiritual and administrative focus of the world Baha'i community.
- collecting, classifying and making available the writings of the central figures of the Baha'i Faith.
- erecting, as resources allow, further Baha'i Houses of Worship.
- extending the relationships of the International Baha'i Community with international organizations such as the United Nations and its subsidiary organizations.

Baha'i International Community and the United Nations:

The worldwide Baha'i community manages its relations with the outside world through the offices of the Baha'i International Community.

Since 1948, the Baha'i International Community has enjoyed recognition as an international non-governmental organization at the United Nations. Since 1970, it has held consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). It also has working relations with the World Health Organization (WHO), and is associated with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The work of the Baha'i International Community is handled by several specialized offices. These include a Secretariat, a United Nations Office, an Office of Public Information, an Office of the Environment, and an Office for the Advancement of Women.

Through representatives based at the Baha'i World Centre in Haifa and in New York, Geneva, Paris, Hong Kong, London, Jerusalem, and Fiji, these offices are involved in a wide range of activities, including efforts in peace-building, human rights, education, health, environmental conservation and sustainable development, and the promotion of women's equality. Many of these activities are undertaken in collaboration with national Baha'i communities.

The Baha'i International Community also collaborates with many international non-governmental organizations. It is, for example, a member of the World Wide Fund for Nature's Network on Conservation and Religion, the Center for Our Common Future, the Education for All Network, the World Conference on Religion and Peace, and the Advocates for African Food Security.

SITE

Next comes taht valley words cannot express,
 The Vale of Poverty and Nothingness:
 Here you are lame and deaf, the mind has gon
 You enter an obscure oblivion.
 When sunlight penetrates the atmosphere
 A hundred thousand shadows disappear,
 And when the sea arises what can save
 The patterns on the surface of each wave?
 The two worlds are those patterns, and in vain
 Men tell themselves what passes will remain.
 Whoever sinks within this sea is blest
 And in self-loss obtains eternal rest;
 The heart that would be lost in this wide sea
 Disperses in profound tranquillity,
 And if it should emerge again it knows
 The secret ways in which the world arose.
 The pilgrim who has grown wise in the Quest,
 The sufi who has weathered every test,
 Are lost when they approach this painful place
 And other men leave not a single trace;
 Because all disappear, you might believe
 That all are equal (just as you perceive
 That twigs and incense offered to a flame
 Both turn to powdered ash and look the same).
 But though they seem to share a common state,
 Their inward essences are separate,
 And evil souls sunk in this mighty sea
 Retain unchanged their base identity:
 But if a pure soul sinks the waves surround
 His fading form, in beauty he is drowned-
 He is not, yet he is; what could this mean?
 It is a state the mind has never seen.

One night that sea of secrets, that loved seer
 Of Tous, said to a pupil standing near:
 "When you are worn out by love's fierce desp
 And in your weakness tremble like a hair,
 You will become that hair and take your place
 In curls that cluster round the loved one's face
 Whoever wastes away for love is made
 A hair concealed within those tresses' shade-
 But if you will not waste away, your soul
 Has made the seven gates of hell its goal."

ANALYSIS

A frenzied lover wept; a passer-by
 Inquired the cause, and this was his reply:
 "They say that when at last the Lord appears,
 He will receive, for forty thousand years,
 The men who are deserving in this place;
 Then from that summit of celestial grace
 They will return and know themselves once m
 Bereft of light, the poorest of the poor.
 I will be shown myself - I weep to think
 That from such heights to such depths I must sit
 I have no need of my identity-
 I long for death; what use is 'I' to me?
 I live with evil while my Self is here;
 With God both Self and evil disappear.
 When I escape the Self I will arise
 And be as God; the yearning pilgrim flies
 From this dark province of mortality
 To Nothingness and to Eternity.
 And though, my heart, you bid the world farew
 To cross the bridge that arches over hell,
 Do not despair - think of the oil-lamp's glow
 That sends up smoke as black as any crow;
 Its oil is changed and what was there before
 The shining flame flared up exists no more.
 So you, my quaking heart, when you endure
 These threatening flames, will rise up rare and

First put aside the Self, and then prepare
 To mount Boraq and journey through the air;
 Drink down the cup of Nothingness; put on
 The cloak that signifies oblivion-
 Your stirrup is the void; absence must be
 The horse that bears you into vacancy.
 Destroy the body and adorn your sight
 With kohl of insubstantial, darkest night.
 First lose yourself, then lose this loss and then
 Withdraw from all that you have lost again-
 Go peacefully, and stage by stage prgress
 Until you gain the realms of Nothingness;
 But if you cling to any worldly trace,
 No news will reach you from that promised plz

community. Its name, Welfare was derived from a refuge for the insane.

EA 9th century the th century known as included Fash's retail stores, popular by class ladies. The cures a mix of eses, churches, s. To the east Park, built as in 1830s -style housing ment, is still an enclave of s surrounding are.

Y SYSTEM nile subway sys- s Manhattan er New York oughs. The first round line was in 1904.

WICH VILLAGE ge of artists, and New York ty students ly replaced the craftsmen who had shop in Green- illage, named for English town by Brit- onists in 1696. y 18th-century rmers had estates e area was also a for New Yorkers epidemics in ensely populated s.

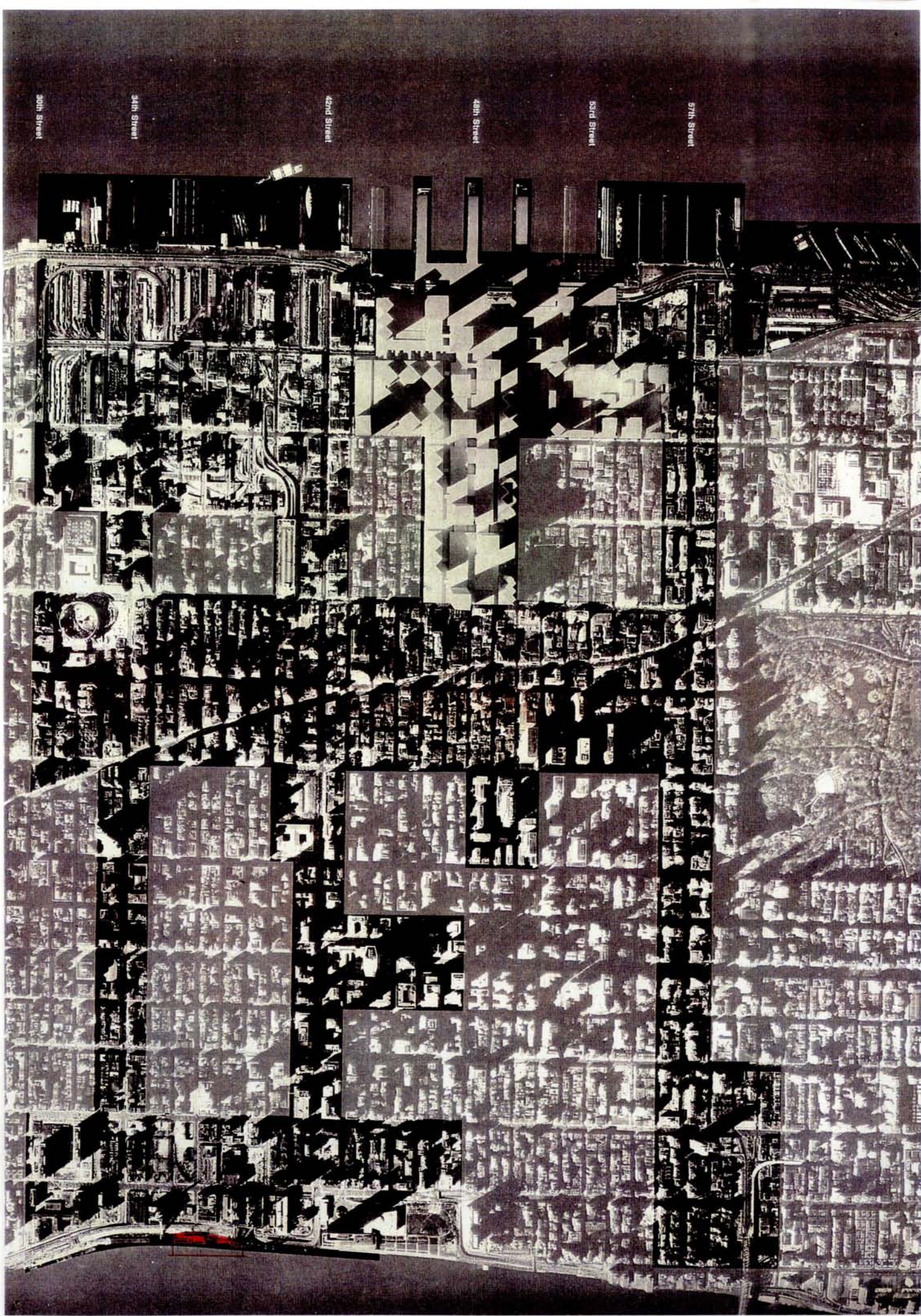
VILLAGE tuyvant's estate d what is now the luge; he is buried side St. Mark's-in- wery Church. The is many ethnic res- s and is the cultural of the Ukrainian unity.

R EAST SIDE nerations newly immigrants have e the Lower East queezed into tene- originally built in d-1800s on a y area northeast of all. Chinese, His- and blacks have replaced Jews in strict popular for its ing bargains.

ATOWN/ E ITALY additional bound- t Chinatown, f Canal Street, panding under a nflux of Chinese rants. Little Italy's restaurants, and clubs still draw families who have moved to other gh.

TRIBECA ant-garde arts area lo (an acronym for





57th Street

55th Street

48th Street

42nd Street

34th Street

30th Street

Site Analysis

Underlying any architectural planning, is the site in and on which it is proposed to build. Geographical foundation, economic and social relationships, communications, and transportation facilities, and it's material resources.

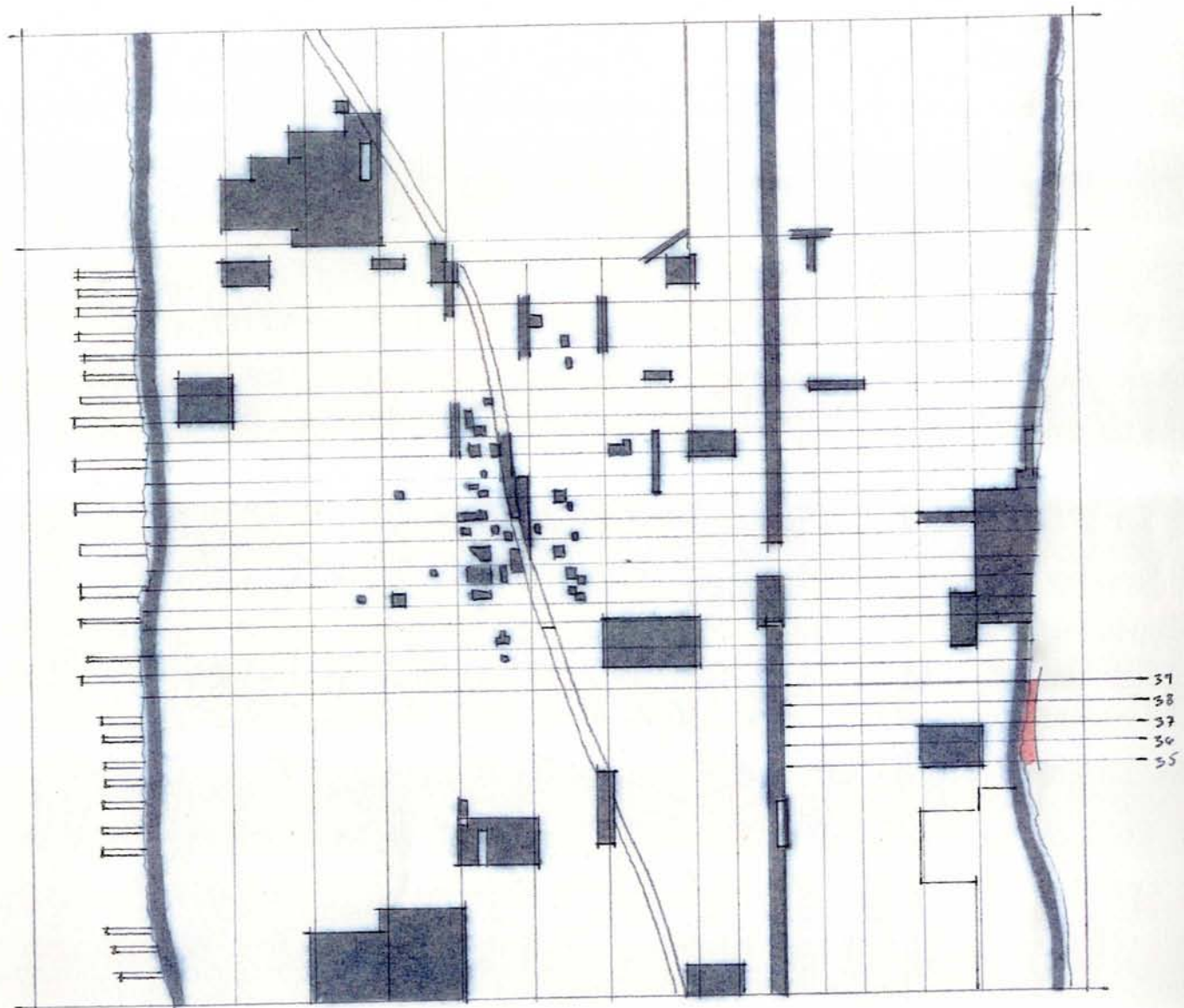
The World Baha'i Institute's site has been selected for it's important, crossroads location of international peace organizations such as, the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace, The Boys Club of America, Amnesty International, and of course, the United Nations. The proximity and relation of the site to the U.N., enables instantaneous communication for the Baha'i World Peace offices and the United Nations offices and Secretariat building. They will have at their disposal every means for efficient communication and conjunction with these organizations.

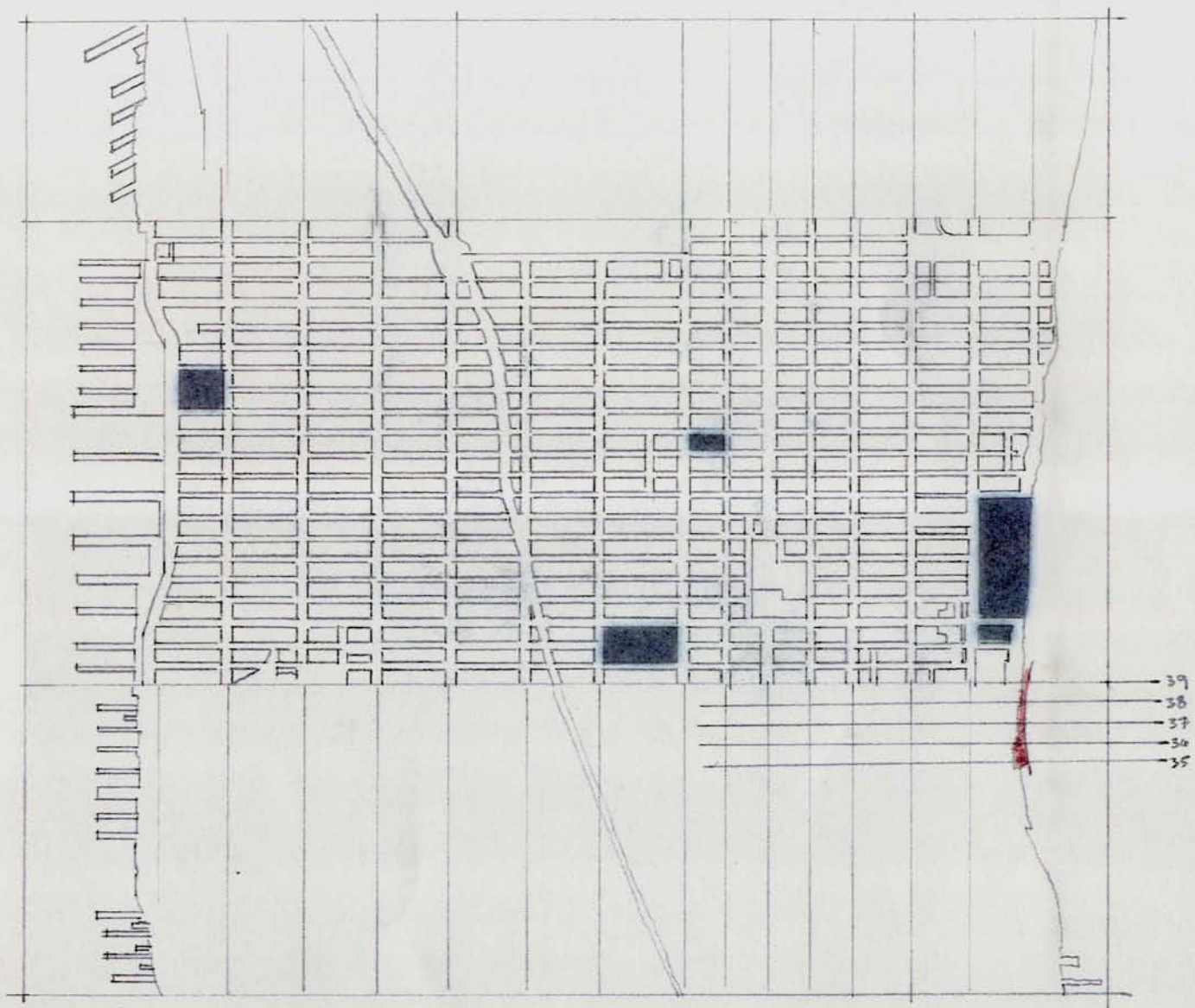
The city of New York is actually considered to be the City of the Covenant, designated by Baha'u'llah. New York is also the first North American city where the Baha'i Faith first travelled and spread to. It was here where Abdu'l-Baha the son of Baha'u'llah and leader of the faith after his father's passing, first landed upon his journey to North America and he said the following of New York upon his arrival:

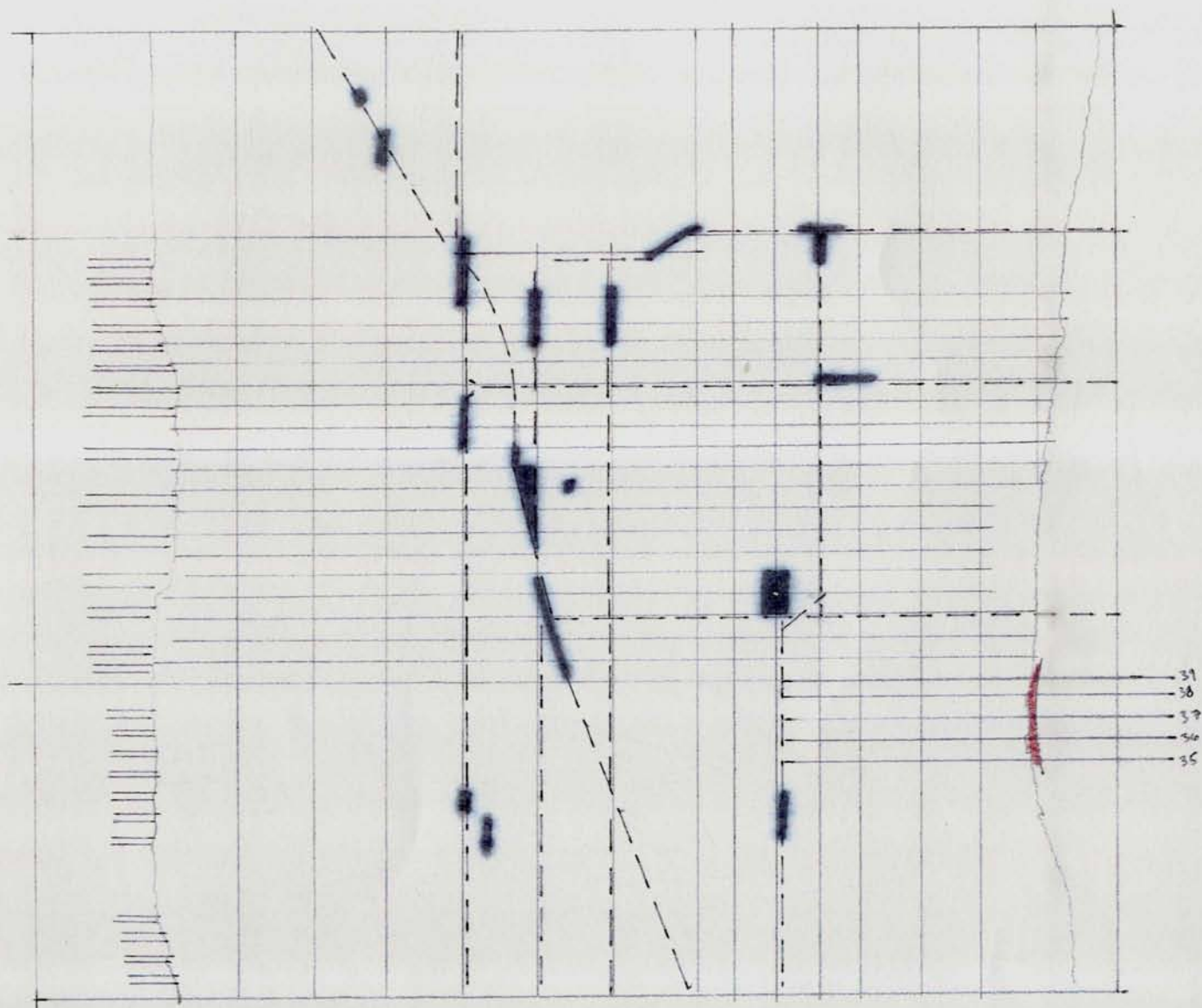
...it (New York) may advance spiritually in the Kingdom and Covenant of God so that the friends here may become the cause of illumination in America, and this city may become the city of love and that the fragrances of God may be spread from this place to all parts of the world.

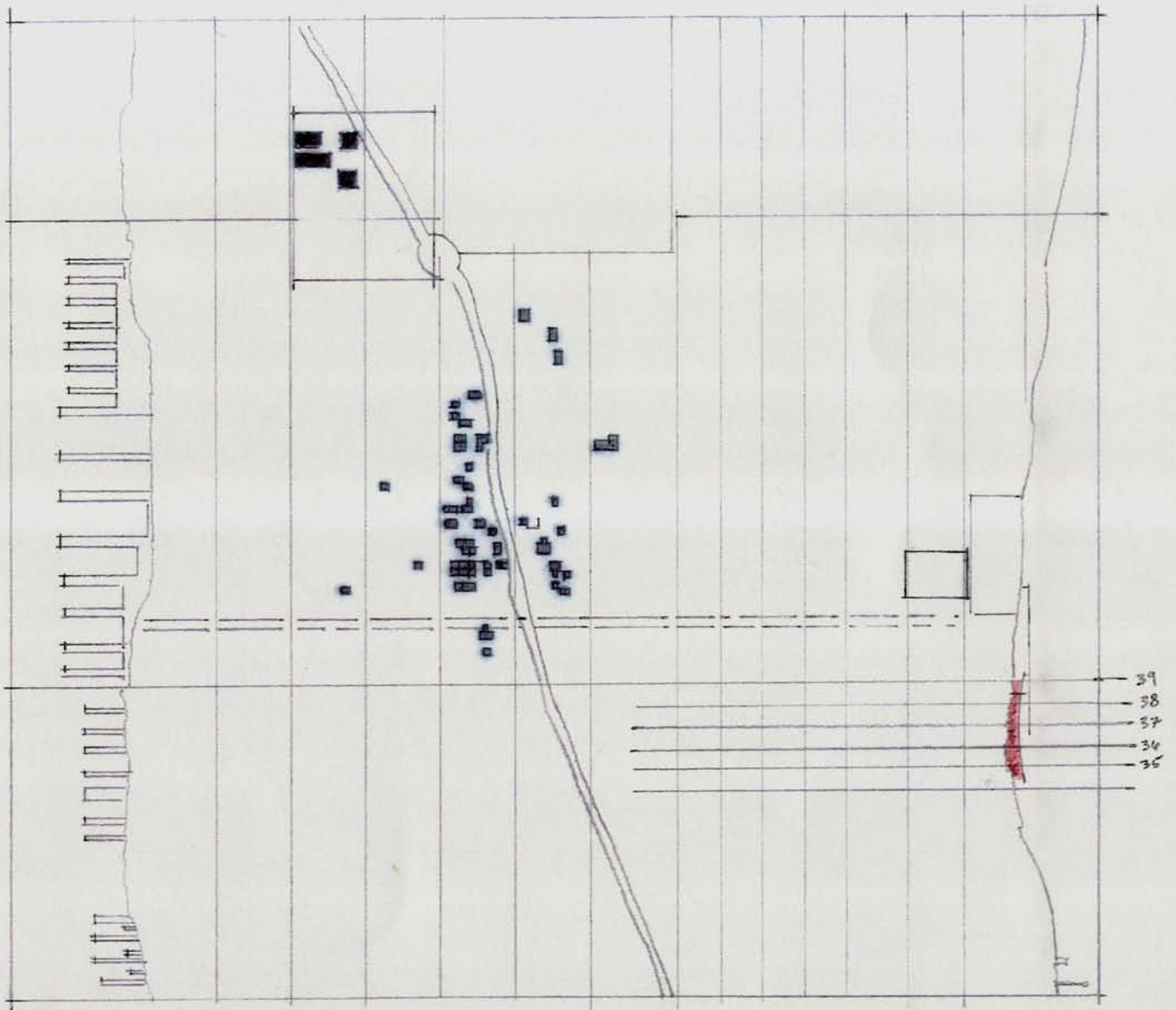
The East River site (meaningfully facing east as the origin of the religion), extending slightly more than 1000 feet from 35th to 39th streets and from the immediacy of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive to the edge of the water and beyond (maximum of 320 feet), has sufficient scale for applying the fundamental elements to design an Institute/Memorial. Protected, yet given added spaciousness and few limitations by the wide expanses of the East River, the site has sufficient extents to be made into perhaps a landscape of architectural elements and forms, working in harmony to establish a dialogue between the rigid city grid structured system and the free sculptural characteristics of the water edge. The city dweller, who lives between walls of buildings that shield and tighten spaces of the city, should find the Baha'i Institute/Memorial site with free, radiant, free flowing spaces.



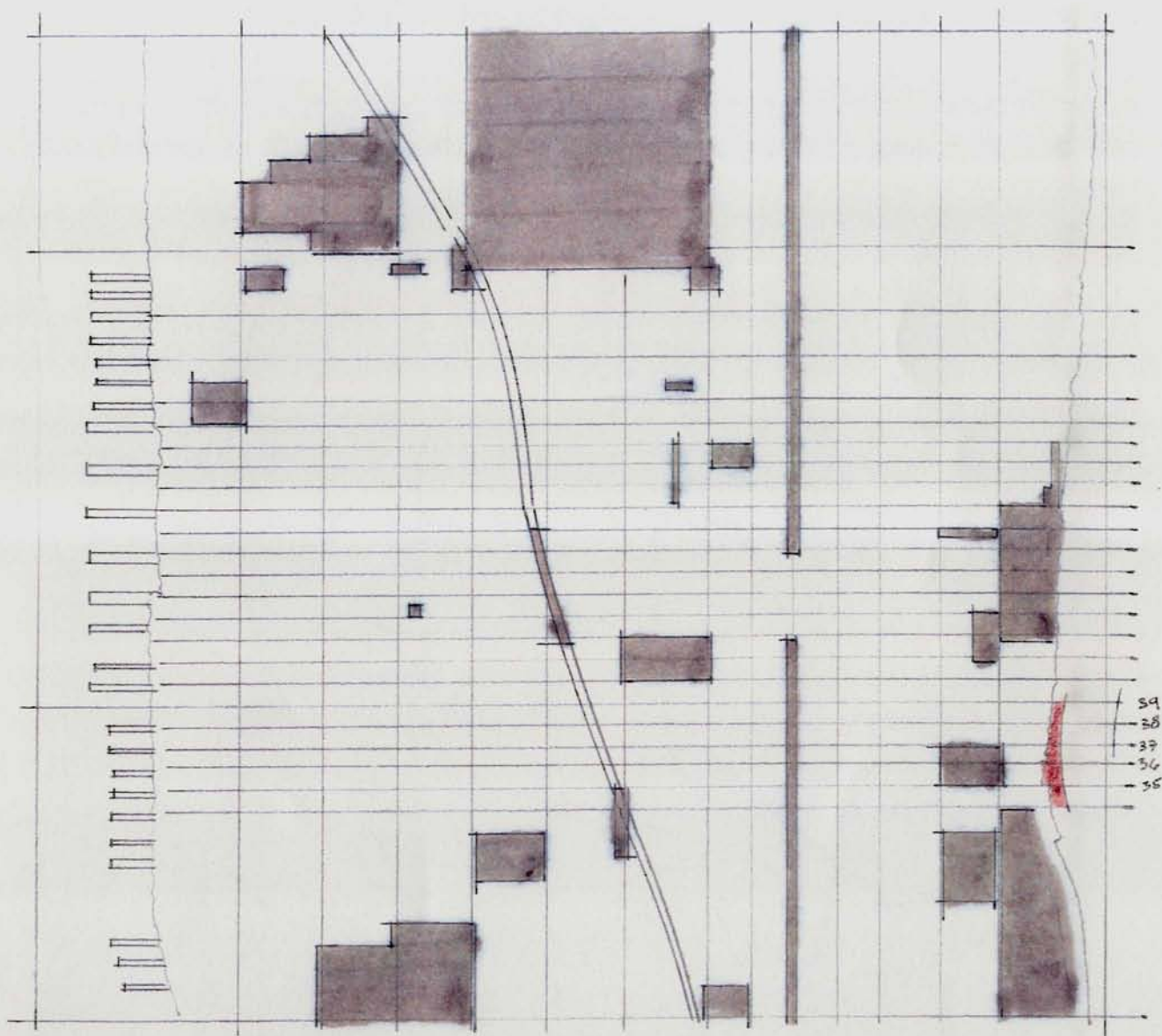












59
58
57
56
55

Traffic and accessibility to and around the site

Detailed analysis of the traffic pattern within the vicinity of the site, both pedestrian and vehicular, based on existing conditions. The analysis illustrates and suggests possible traffic flow from the streets and avenues to better access the site both by car and on foot. The most accessible and effective arrival to the site from the south via the ferry drop off is the most probable and desirable approach and sequence to the Institute. Alterations of the overpass and possible elements to create safe accessibility to the Institute is also provided.



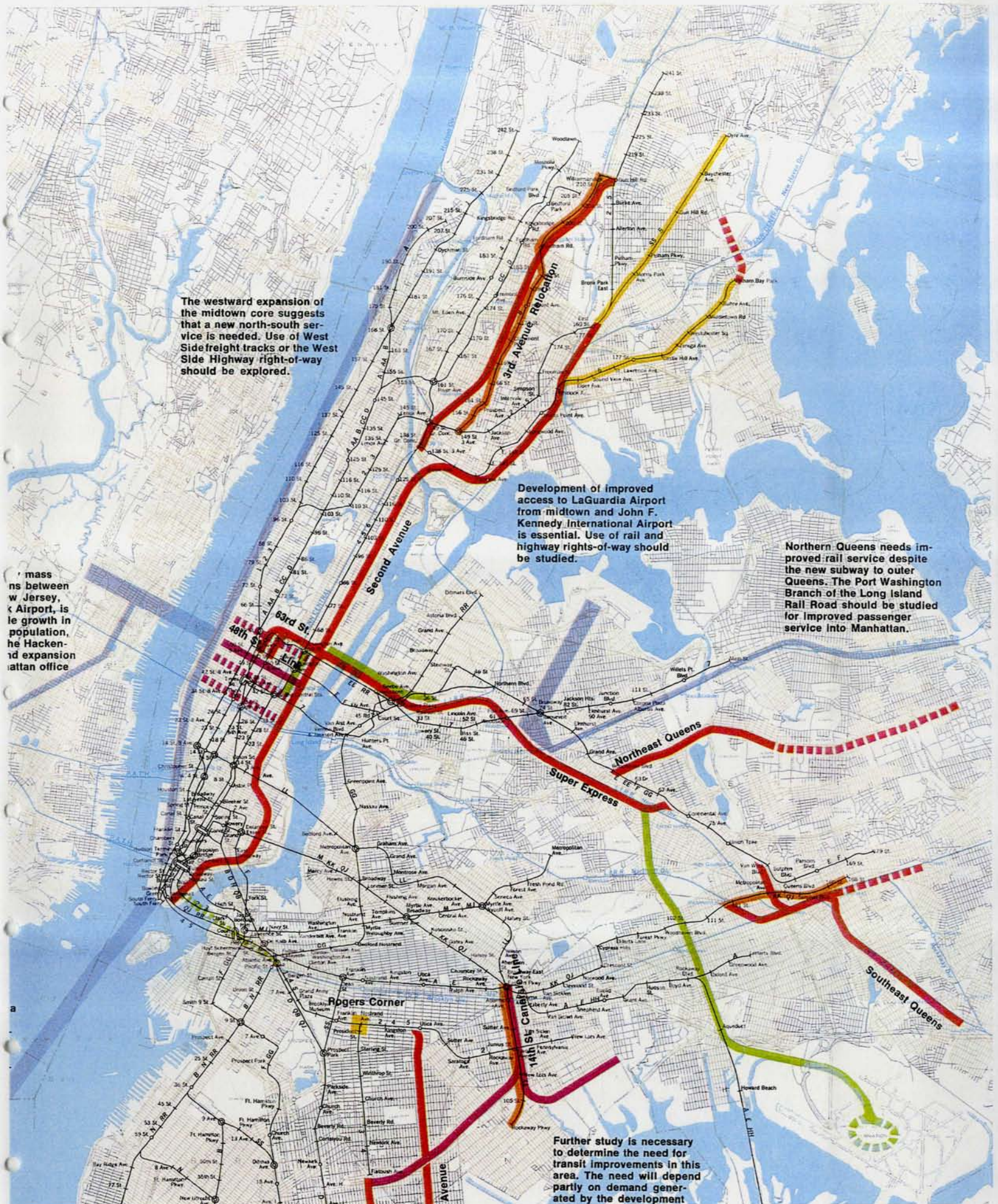
The westward expansion of the midtown core suggests that a new north-south service is needed. Use of West Side freight tracks or the West Side Highway right-of-way should be explored.

Development of improved access to LaGuardia Airport from midtown and John F. Kennedy International Airport is essential. Use of rail and highway rights-of-way should be studied.

Northern Queens needs improved rail service despite the new subway to outer Queens. The Port Washington Branch of the Long Island Rail Road should be studied for improved passenger service into Manhattan.

Further study is necessary to determine the need for transit improvements in this area. The need will depend partly on demand generated by the development

mass
between
w Jersey,
k Airport, is
le growth in
population,
he Hacken-
nd expansion
hattan office



Topography and subsurface conditions

The land on the site slopes gently east to the East River. The approximate land elevation at First Avenue is 25 feet above sea level and there is an approximate drop of 45 feet between First Avenue and the water's edge.

A bedrock of hard Manhattan Schist, lies below the surface which forms a solid base for structure. Schist is a crystalline rock easily split into layers. It falls off toward the river.

The Franklin D. Drive creates a man-made shelf which continues the site out to almost the bulkhead line which was established by the United States Government. There is a pierhead line which has also been approved by the United States Government approximately 100 feet off the land / water edge.

The illustrations provide information of the rock contours of the site, the shoreline of 1820, showing former indentation of Turtle Bay, and the present bulkhead line and pierhead line.

THE

SEVEN

VALLEYS

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You enter an obscure oblivion.
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The two worlds are those patterns, and in vain
Men tell themselves what passes will remain.
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And in self-loss obtains eternal rest;
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The pilgrim who has grown wise in the Quest,
The sufi who has weathered every test,
Are lost when they approach this painful place.
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That all are equal (just as you perceive
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I have no need of my identity-
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And be as God; the yearning pilgrim flies
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These threatening flames, will rise up rare and p

First put aside the Self, and then prepare
To mount Boraq and journey through the air;
Drink down the cup of Nothingness; put on
The cloak that signifies oblivion-
Your stirrup is the void; absence must be
The horse that bears you into vacancy.
Destroy the body and adorn your sight
With kohl of insubstantial, darkest night.
First lose yourself, then lose this loss and then
Withdraw from all that you have lost again-
Go peacefully, and stage by stage progress
Until you gain the realms of Nothingness:
But if you cling to any worldly trace,
No news will reach you from that promised place

The Seven Valleys and it's history

The Seven Valleys of Baha'u'llah, in fact is a lengthy reply letter to Shaykh Muhid-Din. The reply based on the ideas and interpretations of Baha'u'llah on mystic thought and literature. Baha'u'llah's dominating piece in his letter, is the metaphor of the *Seven Valleys* found in Attar's most loved and famous work, *The Conference of the Birds*. In some ways Baha'u'llah's Seven Valleys can be viewed as a restatement of mystical truth and the mystical path.

At the time Baha'u'llah wrote *The Seven Valleys*, religious history was situated between the transition of two religions with inspiring individuals. The Persian Prophet, the Bab had begun a ministry in 1844 announcing the coming of a new Messenger. Nine years after his death in 1850, Baha'u'llah began his mission. At the time, Baha'u'llah wrote this, he had been in seclusion in search and study of mystical thought. It was after this time that he announced his mission.

However, the text which will strongly influence the design process and structure of the Baha'i Institute, is *The Seven Valleys* from Attar's *The Conference of the Birds*. The reason why this text was chosen was because of the structure of the text and because of its originality, and precedents in influencing Baha'u'llah. Through analysis of the text, I have found that the structure of the writings pertains to some Baha'i beliefs and rituals which would strengthen the project. Some of these events are coincidental, but others, are the basis on the spiritual life of a Baha'i.

Based on research and readings done on the subject, and the writings of Baha'u'llah and Attar, the specific recognition and comparison between Baha'u'llah's *Seven Valleys*, and Attar's *Seven Valleys* was made. I found this text extremely important in the founding of the Baha'i Faith and as a great influence on Baha'u'llah. I therefore chose to ultimately utilize this text, as the generator of the design of the Baha'i Institute. *The Seven Valleys* is a beautiful mystical essay revealing the essentials of the seeker's quest to attain access to the Inaccessible-'God'.

*The quest of the lover for his beloved, of the true seeker for the path to enlightenment, this is the journey through The Seven Valleys of Baha'u'llah. Written in the mystical tradition of the Sufi poets, it recounts the odyssey of the human soul as it travels from the plain of creation to the sphere of the absolute, its ultimate goal: reunion with God.
...this vivid portrayal of the spiritual pilgrimage conveys the timeless verities of faith to guide and inspire the soul.*

That is the introduction given in the book, which briefly describes the overall theme of the essay. to the followers of the Baha'i Faith, this text has great importance and meaning, because it was written just prior to His proclamation of the Faith.

The other text, which in response to Baha'u'llah's *Seven Valleys* is also of great importance, is *The Conference of the Birds*, written by Farid ud-Din Attar, a Persian mystic poet from the 12th century.

In his text, Attar tells the story of the birds journey and search for divine unity, and their goal of unity with God. In the journey, Attar uses the metaphoric Seven Valleys, which Baha'u'llah uses as the structure from his version.

Baha'u'llah:

1. Valley of Search
2. Valley of Love
3. Valley of Knowledge
4. Valley of Unity
5. Valley of Contentment
6. Valley of Wonderment
7. Valley of True Poverty & Absolute Nothingness

Attar:

- Valley of the Quest
- Valley of Love
- Valley of Insight and Mystery
- Valley of Detachment
- Valley of Unity
- Valley of Bewilderment
- Valley of Poverty and Nothingness

The Valley of Seach

a- Patience

such is the patience that our pilgrims need/ and many start our quest but few succeed.
(p. 171)

b. The open door

*once someone cried to God: 'Lord, let me see/ The door between us opened onto me!'
'when has the door been closed, I'd like to know?'" (p. 172)*

The basic elements and ideology behind the Valley of Search, are the important element of patience, and sacrifice. The tale traces to journey of the soul, symbolised by the 'mystic wayfarer', throughout the worlds of God. In this instance the journey takes the form of seven valleys, through which the traveller must pass before he can be reunited with the object of his quest.



The Valley of Love

a. Desire

Love's valley is the next, and here desire / will plunge the pilgrim into seas of fire.
(p. 172)

b. We seek true love through our little earthly experiments.

true lovers tread this path and turn aside / their souls rise up from death and seek above / the undiscovered, secret home of love. (p. 178)

In this valley the traveller becomes unaware of the Self, and desire takes over the soul, and the traveller loses the ability to make good judgement. Without pain this journey will never end, and everything must be done for the beloved.

*Love setteth a world aflame at every turn, and he wasteth every land where he carrieth his banner.
Being hath no existence in his kingdom; the wise wield no command within his realm. The leviathan
of love swalloweth the master of reason and destroyeth the lord of knowledge. Baha'u'llah*



The Valley of Knowledge

a. Each person goes his own way.

there are so many roads, and each is fit / for that one pilgrim who must follow it.

(p. 179)

b. As many religions as people.

In this valley, the world is a dark place, and knowledge is a light. A sparkling jewel to lead you through the night.
step outside the stage we know, the dark of our life below.

This path brings sorrow and fear.

This kind of knowledge is only possible through the perception of the inner eye, and not through merely acquired intellectual fact.

Baha'u'llah relates the tale of an anguished lover pursued by those seeking to harm him, but who inevitably lead him to reunion with his beloved. Had the lover been aware of the outcome before the event, he would have seen his pursuers as angels, not of darkness, but of light. Knowledge, then, is the perception of the end in the beginning.



The Valley of Detachment

a. Banishment of earthly lust, fears, and desires.

all claims, all lust for meaning disappear.

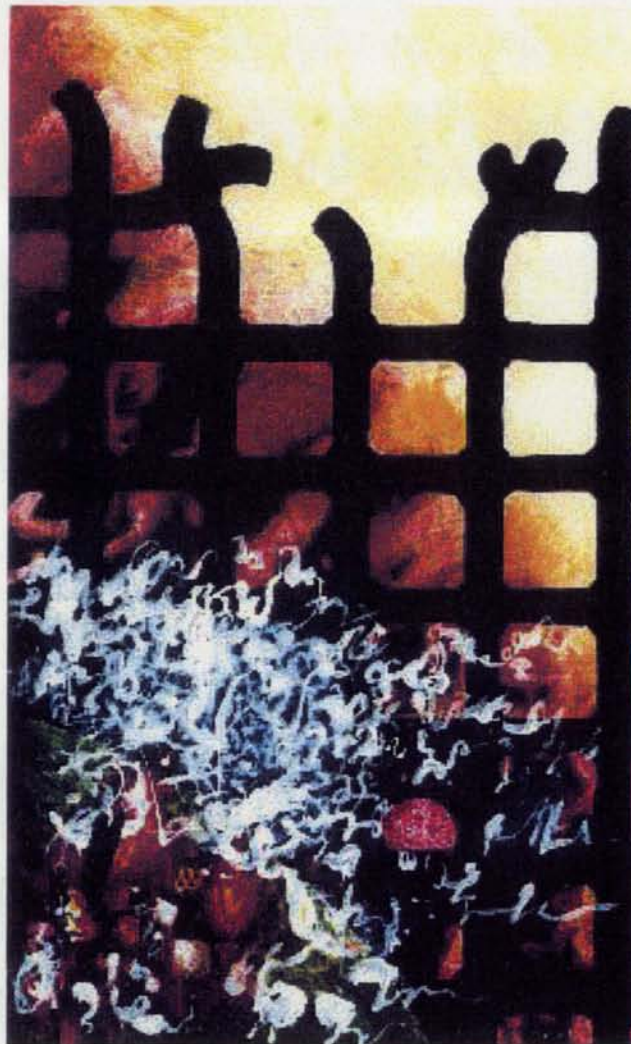
(p. 184)

act with detachment now in everything / this valley makes creation disappear.

All lust for meaning disappear. It sours the land and lays the valley waste. This valley is more like dust and death than paradise. It is all about detaching yourself from life, earth and love.

when one is released from the prison of Self, that is indeed freedom, for Self is the greatest prison

In the Baha'i Faith history, the proof of this valley is clear. Many who were wealthy on entering the Faith had all their belongings confiscated. But far from making them give up, it served only to make them less concerned with the material trappings that created barriers between themselves and God.



The Valley of Unity

a. Unity in diversity?

the many here are merged in one; one form / involves the multifarious thick swarm
(p. 191)

b. Unity of soul with God

Representation of oneness and singleness, are the fundamentals of this valley. The many here are merged in one, one form. This is the oneness of diversity, not oneness lacked in singularity.

This valley marks the transition from the temporal world to the metaphysical. from the plane of limitation to that of the absolute.



The Valley of Bewilderment

- a. Those *mad with love for God* . (p. 154)
blinded by grief, you will not recognize / the days and nights that pass before you eyes.
(p. 196)
If some asks: ' what is your present state / is drunkenness or sober sense you fate...
(p. 196)
- b. Man who lost his key
the sufi said: 'And why should you complain? / You know where this door is; if you remain /
outside it - even if it is shut fast / someone no doubt will open it at last, (p. 201)
- b. What is the meaning of the key?

The wayfarer now discovers the immensity of creation, he is strukck dumb in wonder.



The Valley of Nothingness and Poverty

a. Nothingness is totally losing yourself in God

*whoever sinks within this sea is blest / and in self lost obtains eternal rest / the heart
that would be lost in this wide sea / Disperses in profound tranquility. (p. 204-5)
I live with evil while my Self is here / with God both Self and evil disappear / when
I escape the Self I will arise / And be as God; the yearning pilgrim flies / From this
dark province of mortality / to Nothingness and Eternity.*

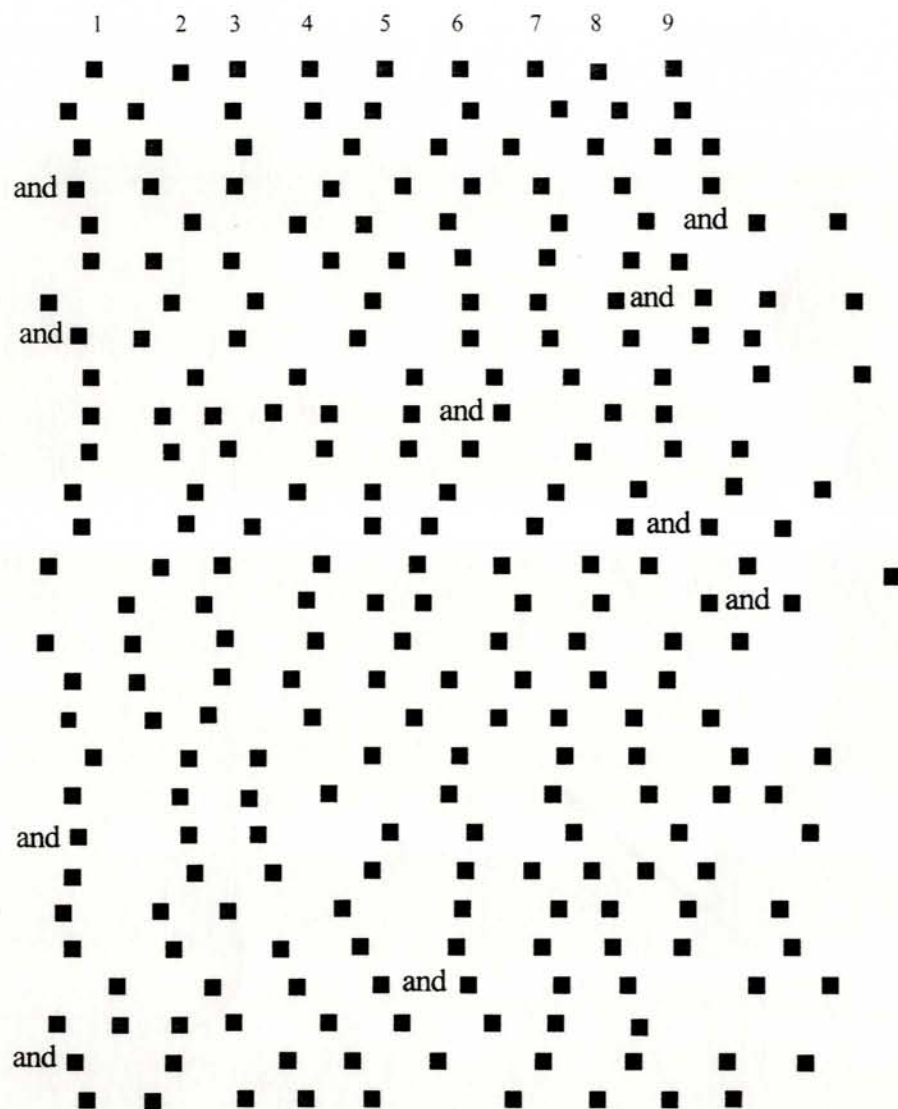
If any trace of the Self is left, all is finally burned away in this valley.



The Valley of the Quest

When ■ you ■ be■ gin ■ the ■ Val ■ ley ■ of ■ the ■ Quest
Mis ■ for ■ tunes ■ will ■ de ■ prive ■ you ■ of ■ all ■ rest,
Each ■ mo ■ ment ■ some ■ new ■ tro ■ uble ■ ter ■ ri ■ fies,
And ■ par ■rots ■ there ■ are ■ pa ■ nic ■ -stri ■ cken ■ flies.
There ■ years ■ must ■ va ■ nish ■ while ■ you ■ strive ■ and ■ grieve;
There ■ is ■ the ■ heart ■ of ■ all ■ you ■ will ■ a ■ chieve-
Re ■ nounce ■ the ■ world, ■ your ■ po ■ wer ■ and ■ all ■ you ■ own,
And ■ in ■ your ■ heart's ■ blood ■ jour ■ ney ■ on ■ a ■ lone.
when ■ once ■ your ■ hands ■ are ■ em ■ pty, ■ then ■ your ■ heart
Must ■ pu ■ ri ■ fy ■ it ■ self ■ and ■ move ■ a ■ part
From ■ eve ■ ry ■ thing ■ that ■ is ■ -when ■ this ■ is ■ done,
The ■ Lord's ■ light ■ bla ■ zes ■ brigh ■ ter ■ than ■ the ■ sun,
Your ■ heart ■ is ■ bathed ■ in ■ splen ■ dour ■ and ■ the ■ quest
Ex ■ pands ■ a ■ thou ■ sand ■ fold ■ with ■ in ■ your ■ breast.
Thought ■ fire ■ flares ■ up ■ a ■ cross ■ his ■ path, ■ and ■ though
A ■ hun ■ dred ■ mon ■ sters ■ peer ■ out ■ from ■ its ■ glow,
The ■ pil ■ grim ■ dri ■ ven ■ on ■ by ■ his ■ de ■ sire
Will ■ like ■ a ■ moth ■ rush ■ glad ■ ly ■ on ■ the ■ fire.
When ■ love ■ in ■ spires ■ his ■ heart ■ he ■ begs ■ for ■ wine,
One ■ drop ■ to ■ be ■ vouch ■ safed ■ him ■ as ■ a ■ sign-
And ■ when ■ he ■ drinks ■ this ■ drop ■ both ■ worlds ■ are ■ gone;
Dry ■ -lipped ■ he ■ foun ■ ders ■ in ■ ob ■ li ■ vi ■ on.
His ■ zeal ■ to ■ know ■ faith's ■ mys ■ te ■ ries ■ will ■ make
Him ■ fight ■ with ■ dra ■ gons ■ for ■ sal ■ va ■ tion's ■ sake-
Though ■ blas ■ phe ■ my ■ and ■ curs ■ es ■ crowd ■ the ■ gate,
Un ■ til ■ it ■ o ■ pens ■ he ■ will ■ cal ■ mly ■ wait,
And ■ then ■ where ■ is ■ this ■ faith? ■ this ■ blas ■ phe ■ my?
Both ■ va ■ nish ■ in ■ to ■ strength ■ less ■ va ■ ca ■ ncy.

The Valley of the Quest



P R O G R A M

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Then from that summit of celestial grace
They will return and know themselves once more
Bereft of light, the poorest of the poor.
I will be shown myself - I weep to think
That from such heights to such depths I must sit
I have no need of my identity-
I long for death; what use is 'I' to me?
I live with evil while my Self is here;
With God both Self and evil disappear.
When I escape the Self I will arise
And be as God; the yearning pilgrim flies
From this dark province of mortality
To Nothingness and to Eternity.
And though, my heart, you bid the world farewell
To cross the bridge that arches over hell,
Do not despair - think of the oil-lamp's glow
That sends up smoke as black as any crow;
Its oil is changed and what was there before
The shining flame flared up exists no more.
So you, my quaking heart, when you endure
These threatening flames, will rise up rare and

First put aside the Self, and then prepare
To mount Boraq and journey through the air;
Drink down the cup of Nothingness; put on
The cloak that signifies oblivion-
Your stirrup is the void; absence must be
The horse that bears you into vacancy.
Destroy the body and adorn your sight
With kohl of insubstantial, darkest night.
First lose yourself, then lose this loss and then
Withdraw from all that you have lost again-
Go peacefully, and stage by stage progress
Until you gain the realms of Nothingness;
But if you cling to any worldly trace,
No news will reach you from that promised place

Program

The program is strongly influenced by the literature and its translation into architecture. *The Seven Valleys* will be the most influential in shaping and placing the program. Its structure will be the generator of the design and will sculpt and shape the program and progression and placement within the structure.

The World Baha'i Institute

Program of Spaces and Square Footage:

Shared Initial Entry Spaces

- Lobby		1250 Square Feet
- Temporary Exhibition Space		1250 Sq. Ft.
- Permanent Exhibition Space		3500 Sq. Ft.
- Image Gallery		4800 Sq. Ft.
- Tower of Nothingness		360 Sq. Ft.
- Public Restrooms	2 x 230 Sq.Ft.	460 Sq. Ft.
Subtotal:		11620 Sq. Ft.

Learning Centers, Research, Classrooms

- Library		5000 Square Feet
- Archive Room(s)		1500 Sq. Ft.
- Research Hall		1500 Sq. Ft.
- Reading Rooms	9 x 150 Sq. Ft.	1350 Sq. Ft.
- Library Administration Offices		500 Sq. Ft.
- Classrooms	9 x 361 Sq. Ft.	3249 Square Feet
- Learning Hall/Gallery/Lounge		1917 Sq. Ft.
Subtotal:		15498 Sq. Ft.

Auditorium

- 500 Seats Required @ 12 S.F. Each		6000 Square Feet
- Stage Area		456 Sq. Ft.
Subtotal:		6456 Sq. Ft.

Contemplation, Exterior Spaces

- Exterior Terrace		7082 Square Feet
- Exterior Garden		9686 Sq. Ft.
- Prayer and Meditation	19 x 171 Sq. Ft.	3250 Sq. Ft.
Subtotal:		20018 Sq. Ft.

Administration Offices

- 9 Offices for Baha'i International Community at 19' x 19'		3249 Square Feet
1. Secretariat		
2. United Nations Office		

Administration Continued:

3. Office of Public Information
4. Office of Environment
5. Office of Advancement of Women
6. UNICEF Office
7. WHO Office (World Health Organization)
8. UNEP Office (United Nations Environment Programme)
9. Baha'i Newsletter Office

- Conference Rooms	3 x 300 Sq. Ft.	900 Square Feet
- Fax, Computer, Reproduction Room		250 Sq. Ft.
- Exhibition/Memorial Offices	2 x 185 Sq. Ft.	370 Sq. Ft.
- Staff Toilets	2 x 200 Sq. Ft.	400 Sq. Ft.
	Subtotal:	5169 Sq. Ft.

Miscellaneous and Service Program

- Food Services		1460 Square Feet
- Recieving Area		1000 Sq. Ft.
- HVAC		3350 Sq. Ft.
	Subtotal;	5810 Sq. Ft.

Total Net Square Footage:

64577 Square Feet

Total Gross S. F. x 1.4

90407 Square Feet

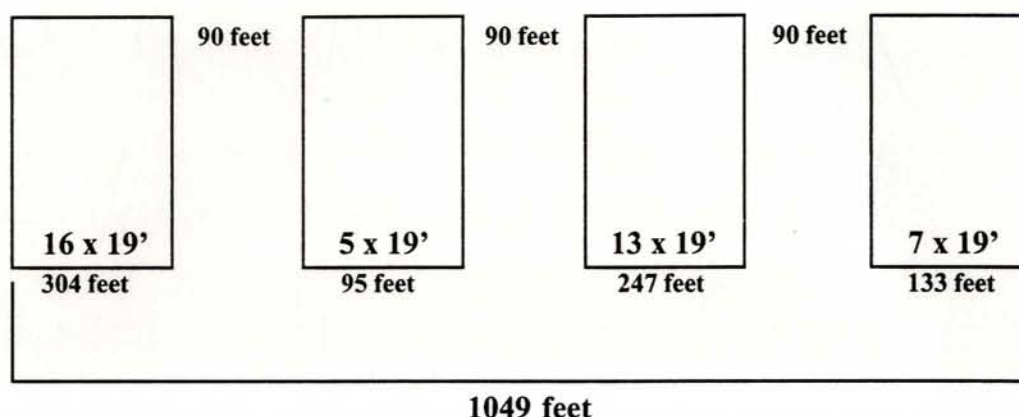
Memory and Remembrance

- Memorial	41 Walls x 7' thick	101,960 Square Feet
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The Seven Valleys and the Program

The *Seven Valleys* structure greatly influences the size and requirements for the program. The initial discription of the Valleys as described in the book is used structurally and mathematically to determine the square footage of the program. The number of sentences and their structure in each intro to the Valleys determine a specific percentage of the overall whole.

The dimensions of the site were determined by the text, organization and structure of the last Valley, The Valley of Nothingness and Poverty. The intro and description of this Valley as written by Attar consists of 41 pairs of sentences or sonnets which become the organizational element of the site. These sonnets are broken up into 4 sections, the first being 16 pairs, the second 5 pairs, the third is 13 pairs and the final section consists of 7 pairs. Using the periods and rituals in the Baha'i Faith, and multiplying 19 by the number of sentence pairs, we arrive at a number. This number represents the length in feet of each section. Therefor, these sentences are seperated by 19 feet, in between each section, there is a 90 feet span whcih acts as the break between the sonnets.



The sum of these numbers comes to 1049 feet as the length of the site.

The width is derived from the actual length of the sentences and their structure. Each letter is represented by 9 feet, and the syllables, which create 9 seperations in the sentence also are 9 feet apart. The average width of the site, therefor is about 325 feet, extending into the water. The square footage of the site therefor, comes to approximately 340,000 square feet. From this number, 19% is dedicated to the program footprint. This number is approximately 64500 square feet and from this a percentage relating to the text is subtracted for each Valley.

There are 140 pairs of sentences which make up the intro and description of all of the Seven Valleys.

Valley	Number of Sonnets	Percentage of 140 Sonnets	Square Feet
1- Search	14	10 %	6457
2- Love	21	15 %	9686
3. Knowledge	23	16 %	10332
4. Detachment	23	16 %	10332
5. Unity	7	5 %	3228
6. Bewilderment	11	8 %	5166
7. Nothingness	41	30 %	101962

From the metaphoric analysis of the text, specific programmatic elements were chosen which would best fit each Valley.

Sequentially, the lobby, and the temporary and permanent exhibits where placed and were compared to the Valley of Search. This marks the beginning of the journey through the Institute. In this Valley, art work, historical doctrines, artifacts, photographs, and writings which are derivatives of the religion and the country of Iran will be on display. It will become a space wher the general public can be taught of the history of th Faith, and to expose the works of Persian and or

Baha'i artists.

In the Valley of Love, the important garden elements of the Baha'i Faith will create a world of desire, Love and beauty. This space therefor will consist of exterior terraces and docks and platforms which compositionally create horizontal transitional elements between the land and the water.

In the Valley of Knowledge, the guiding light of the Fear of God, and knowledge will create the learning and research center. Based on fundamental guidelines of the religion, one of the most important issues for the Faith, is the introduction of compulsory education, and the independent search after truth, which because of its importance, becomes the principal element in the program and function of the building. The library, archive rooms, research halls and classrooms, create the Valley or atmosphere of knowledge and learning of the Baha'i Faith and its history. It becomes an isolated element, "a sparkling jewel to lead you through the night" which acts as the object between the traveller and the Valley of Unity.

Here in the Valley of Unity, the members of the Baha'i faith and other organizations come together and discuss world affairs in a 500 person auditorium. Besides this function, conferences, banquets, seminars, lectures and performances will take place, in the singular Valley of Unity.

Another exterior and sometimes covered element which marks the transition between the temporal and metaphysical worlds, is the Valley of Detachment. It becomes a threshold, a plane of peace, and tranquility for contemplation where people can pray in designated secluded areas. A space where the focus is out towards the nature and becomes woven into the 41 walls of the Valley of Nothingness and Poverty. From here an image gallery displaying photos of Baha'is and landmarks of the Faith, lead the traveller to the Tower of Nothingness.

Throughout the past century, the Baha'is of Iran have been persecuted. Nearly 20,000 of the Baha'is since the dawn of the Faith, have been executed, thousands more have been imprisoned, and tens of thousands have been deprived of jobs, pensions, businesses, and educational opportunities. All national Baha'i administrative structures have been banned by the government of Iran, and holy places, shrines and cemeteries have been confiscated, vandalised, or destroyed.

A second, but equally important element which also represents the building and its function and importance in remembrance of the Baha'is is a memorial. This component which could possibly be the mediator between the city and the water, is representative of the oppression and victimization of the Baha'i prophet, Baha'u'llah, and his family, who were imprisoned for 40 years, but it also is a symbol for the thousands who have been tortured, imprisoned, and murdered by the Iranian Islamic Government because of their beliefs.

The value of this last Valley and its metaphoric meaning relates to the last stage of life in the world. Dying. This is the moment where one loses him / herself in God.

*Whoever sinks within this sea is blest / and in self lost obtains eternal rest / the heart
that would be lost in this wide sea / Disperses in profound tranquility. (p. 204-5)
when I escape the Self I will rise / And be as God; From this dark province of
mortality / to Nothingness and Eternity.*

If any trace of the Self is left, all is finally burned away in this Valley.

BAHA'I

HOUSES

OF

WORSHIP

Next comes that valley words cannot express,
The Vale of Poverty and Nothingness:
Here you are lame and deaf, the mind has gone
You enter an obscure oblivion.
When sunlight penetrates the atmosphere
A hundred thousand shadows disappear,
And when the sea arises what can save
The patterns on the surface of each wave?
The two worlds are those patterns, and in vain
Men tell themselves what passes will remain.
Whoever sinks within this sea is blest
And in self-loss obtains eternal rest;
The heart that would be lost in this wide sea
Disperses in profound tranquillity,
And if it should emerge again it knows
The secret ways in which the world arose.
The pilgrim who has grown wise in the Quest,
The sufi who has weathered every test,
Are lost when they approach this painful place
And other men leave not a single trace;
Because all disappear, you might believe
That all are equal (just as you perceive
That twigs and incense offered to a flame
Both turn to powdered ash and look the same)
But though they seem to share a common state
Their inward essences are separate,
And evil souls sunk in this mighty sea
Retain unchanged their base identity:
But if a pure soul sinks the waves surround
His fading form, in beauty he is drowned-
He is not, yet he is; what could this mean?
It is a state the mind has never seen.

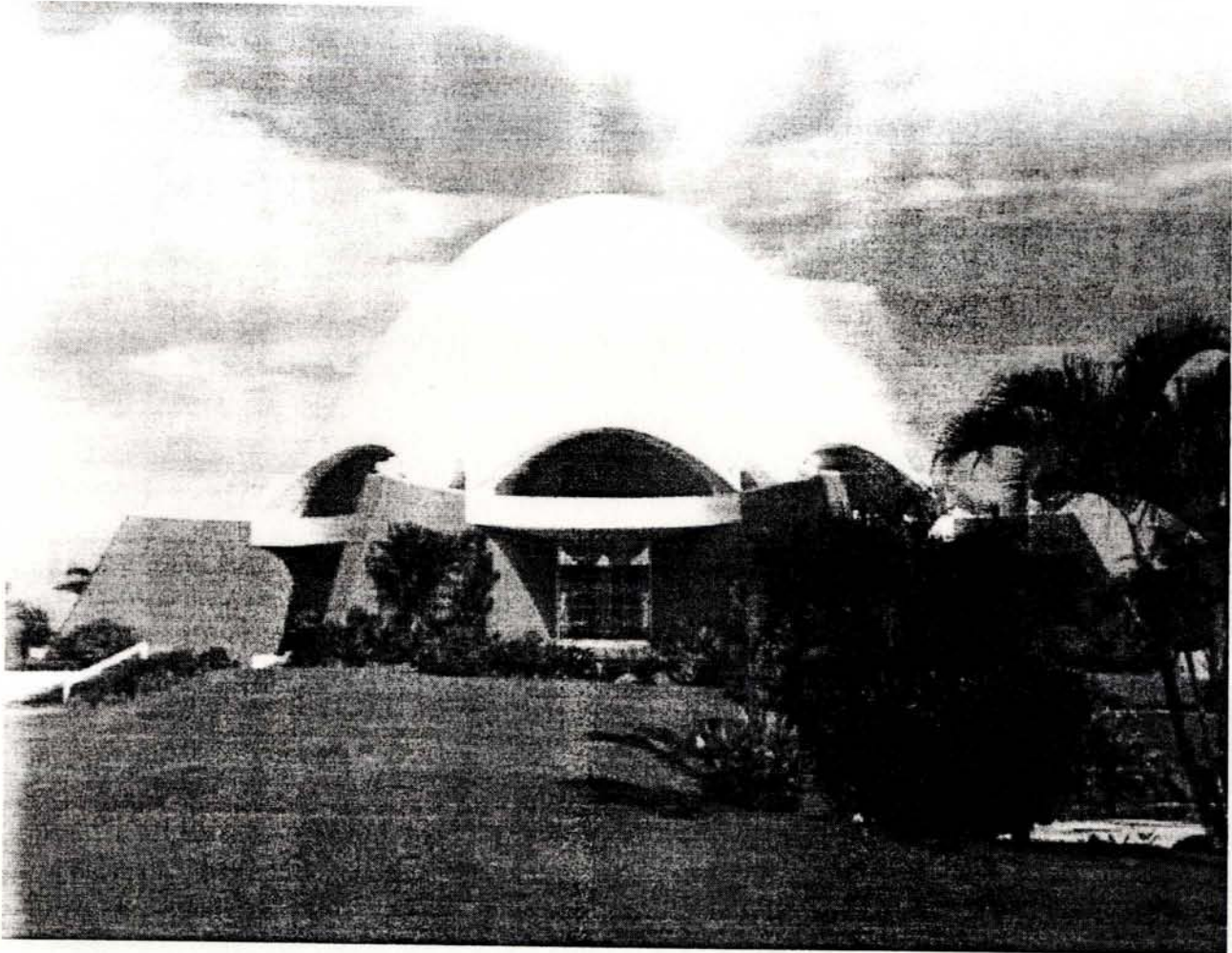
One night that sea of secrets, that loved seer
Of Tous, said to a pupil standing near:
"When you are worn out by love's fierce desire
And in your weakness tremble like a hair,
You will become that hair and take your place
In curls that cluster round the loved one's face
Whoever wastes away for love is made
A hair concealed within those tresses' shade-
But if you will not waste away, your soul
Has made the seven gates of hell its goal."

A frenzied lover wept; a passer-by
Inquired the cause, and this was his reply:
"They say that when at last the Lord appears,
He will receive, for forty thousand years,
The men who are deserving in this place;
Then from that summit of celestial grace
They will return and know themselves once more
Bereft of light, the poorest of the poor.
I will be shown myself - I weep to think
That from such heights to such depths I must sink
I have no need of my identity-
I long for death; what use is 'I' to me?
I live with evil while my Self is here;
With God both Self and evil disappear.
When I escape the Self I will arise
And be as God; the yearning pilgrim flies
From this dark province of mortality
To Nothingness and to Eternity.
And though, my heart, you bid the world farewell
To cross the bridge that arches over hell,
Do not despair - think of the oil-lamp's glow
That sends up smoke as black as any crow:
Its oil is changed and what was there before
The shining flame flared up exists no more.
So you, my quaking heart, when you endure
These threatening flames, will rise up rare and pure."

First put aside the Self, and then prepare
To mount Boraq and journey through the air;
Drink down the cup of Nothingness; put on
The cloak that signifies oblivion-
Your stirrup is the void; absence must be
The horse that bears you into vacancy.
Destroy the body and adorn your sight
With kohl of insubstantial, darkest night.
First lose yourself, then lose this loss and then
Withdraw from all that you have lost again-
Go peacefully, and stage by stage progress
Until you gain the realms of Nothingness:
But if you cling to any worldly trace,
No news will reach you from that promised place.



Bahá'í House of Worship in Panama City, Panama



Located high on a hill just outside Panama City, this House of Worship, designed by architect Peter Tillotson recalls the pre-Columbian architecture, traditions, and aesthetics of the native peoples of the Americas.

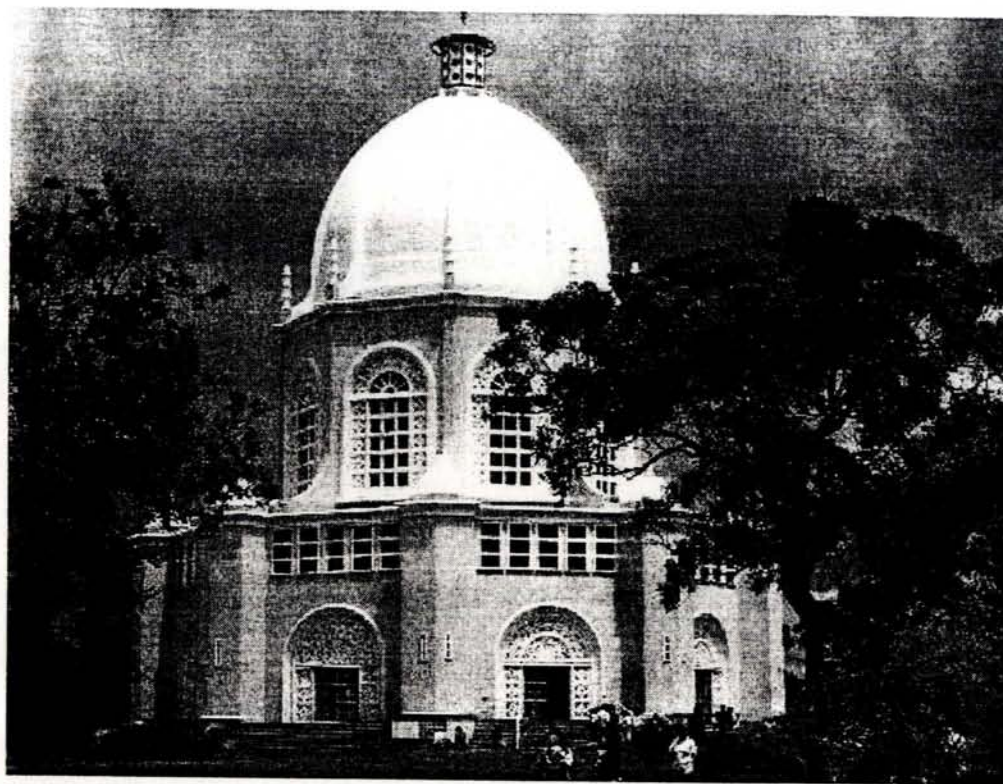
Dedicated in 1972, this Temple, located at the crossroads of the western hemisphere, unites the East and West, the North and South.

House of Worship - Panama



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Bahá'í House of Worship near Sydney, Australia





House of Worship - Australia

House of Worship - Australia

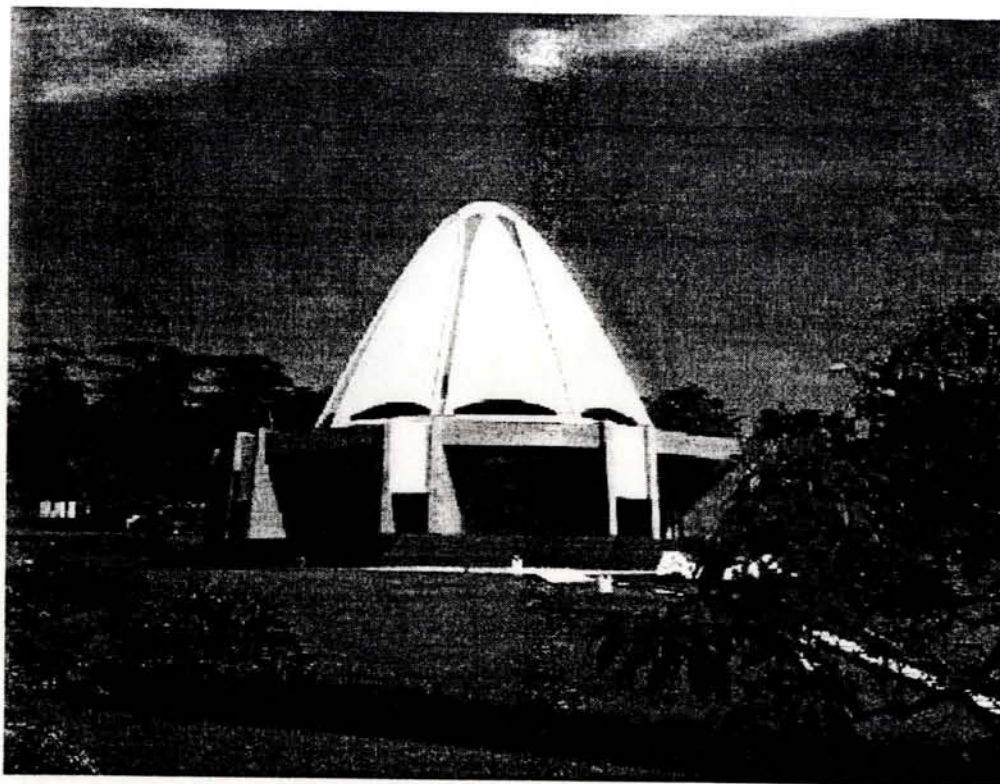


[\[Return to Image Menu Page \]](#)

[\[Back \]](#)   [\[Next \]](#) Bahá'í House of Worship in New Delhi, India - [Image size 36k]

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Bahá'í House of Worship in Apia, Western Samoa



House of Worship - Western Samoa

House of Worship - Samoa



[\[Return to Image Menu Page \]](#)



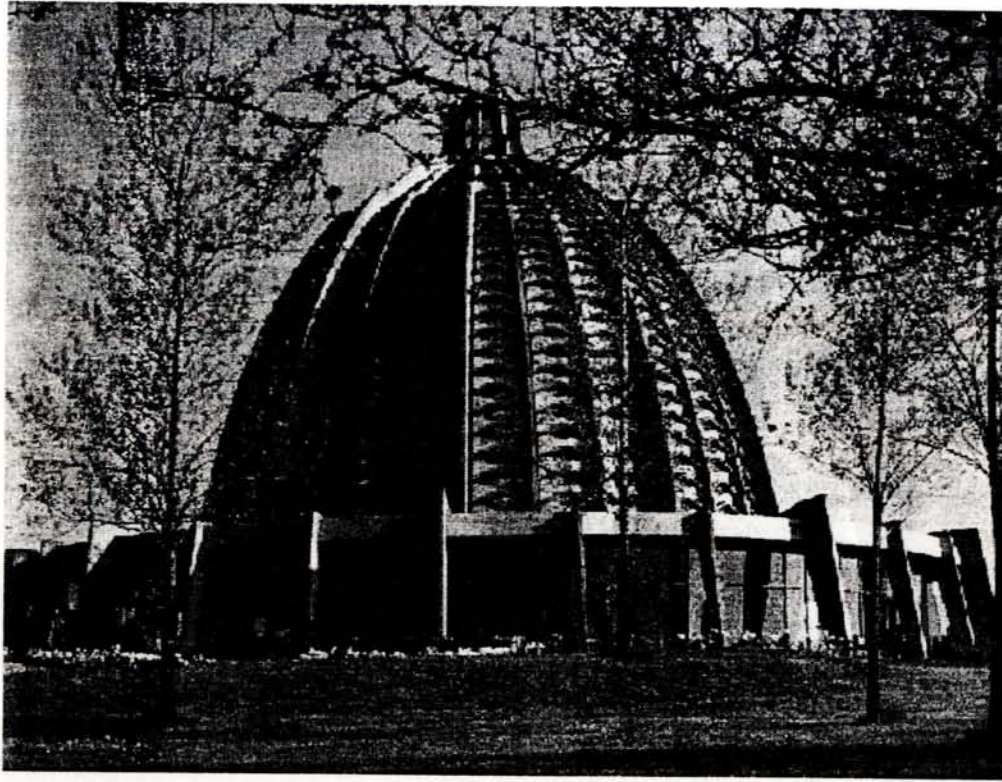
[\[Back \]](#)   [\[Next \]](#) Bahá'í House of Worship near Sydney, Australia - [Image size 50k]

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Bahá'í House of Worship in Frankfurt, Germany





House of Worship - Germany

House of Worship - Germany

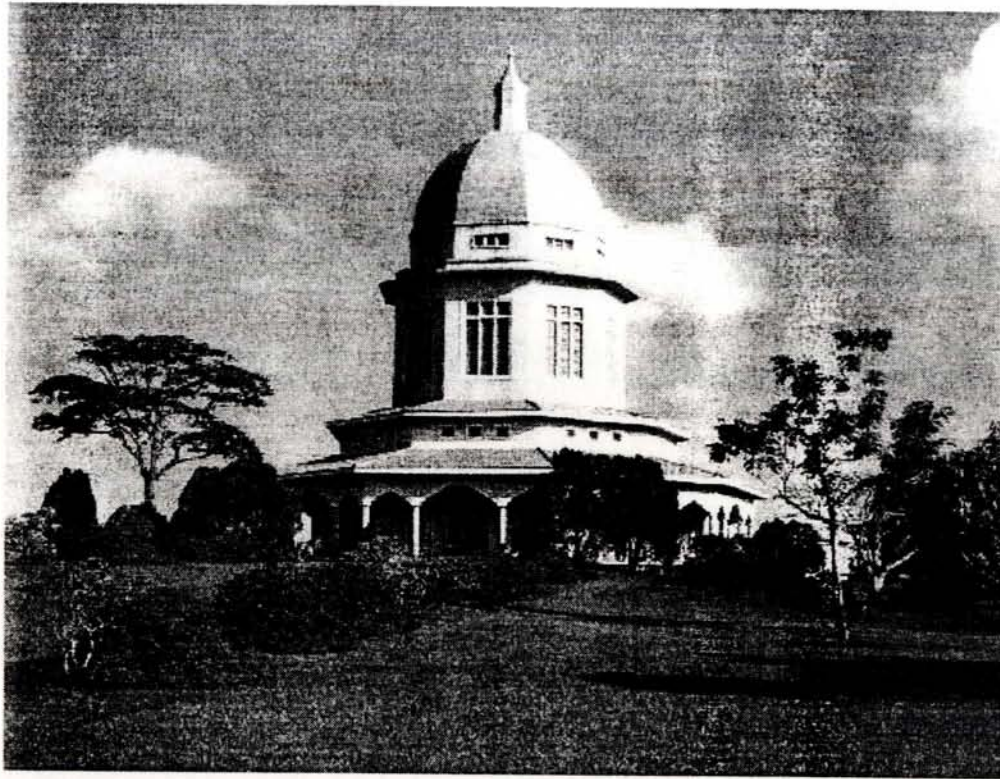


[\[Return to Image Menu Page \]](#)

[\[Back \]](#)   [\[Next \]](#) Bahá'í House of Worship in Apia, Western Samoa - [\[Image size 37k \]](#)

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Bahá'í House of Worship in Kampala, Uganda



House of Worship - Uganda

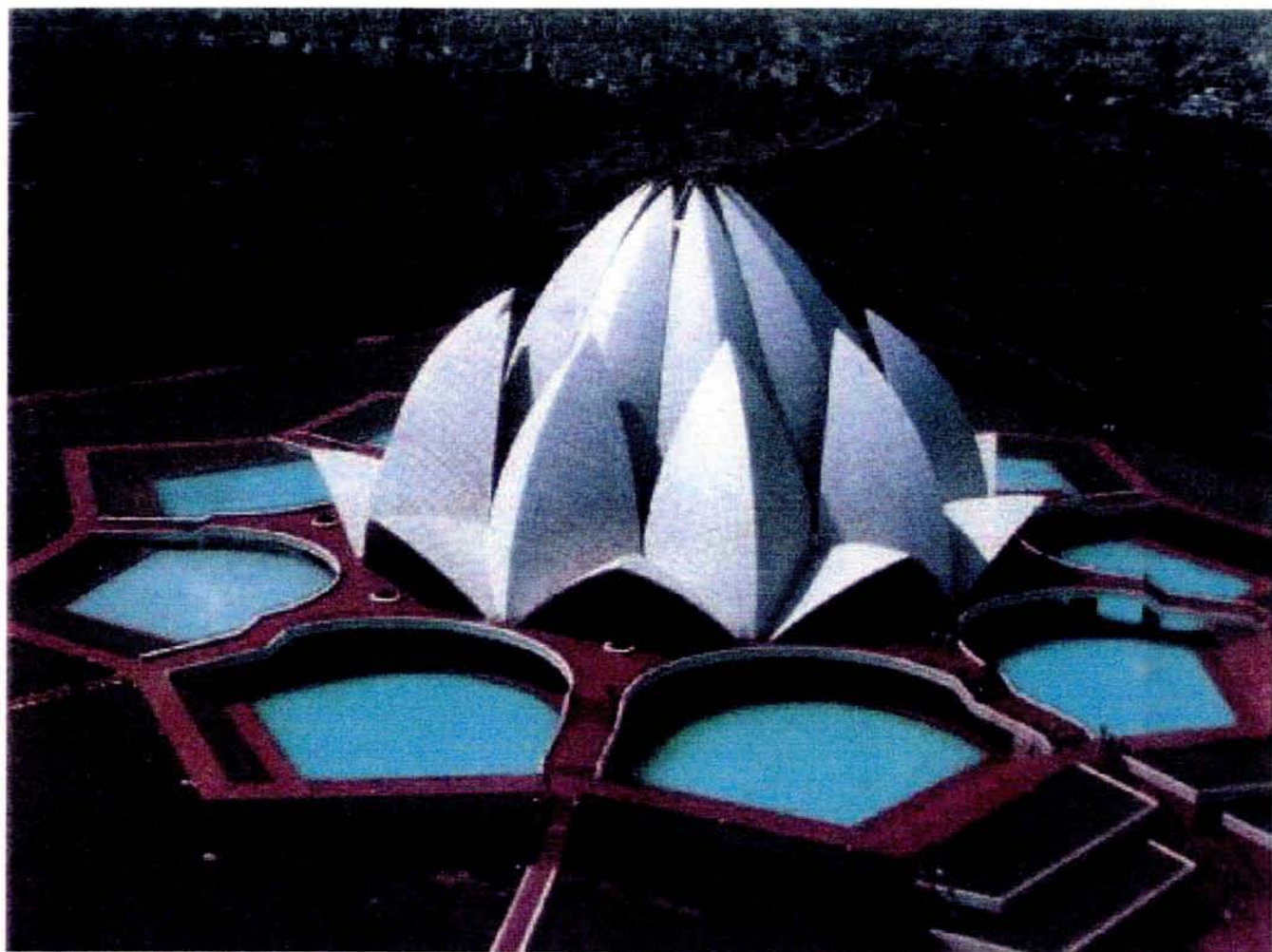
House of Worship - Uganda

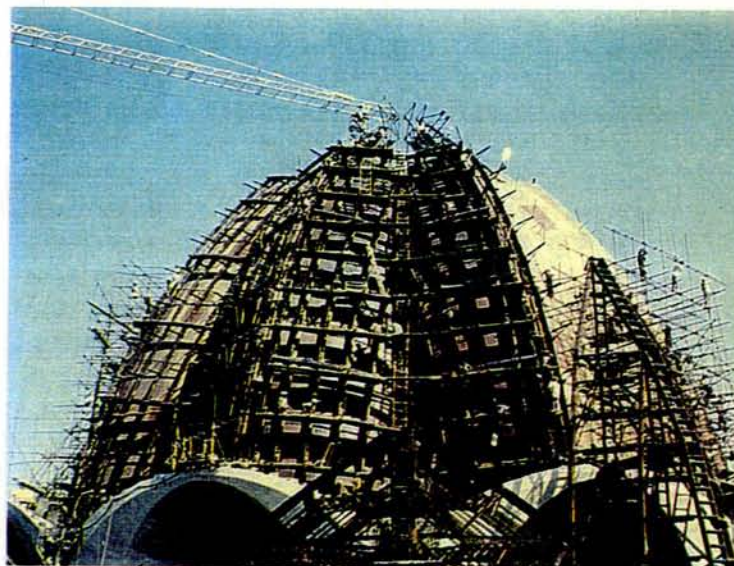
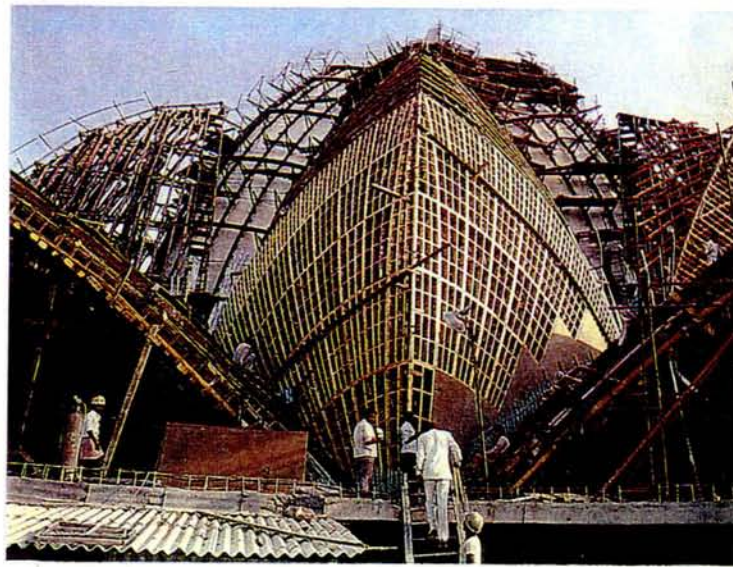
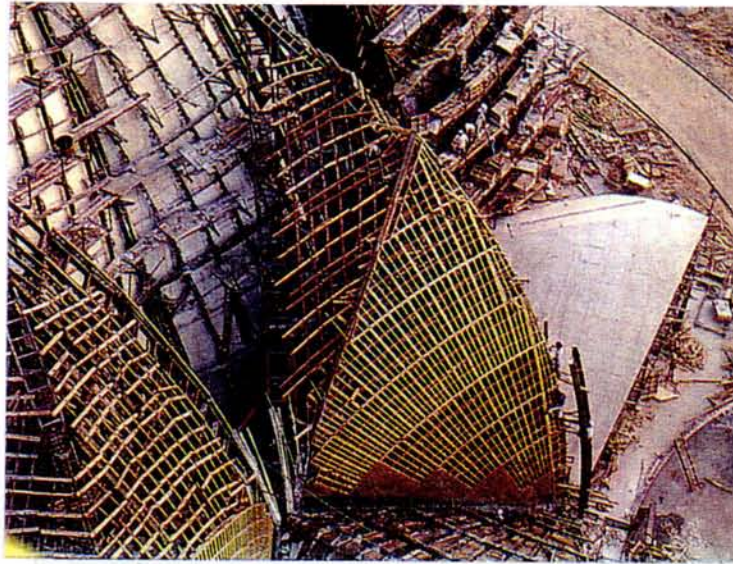


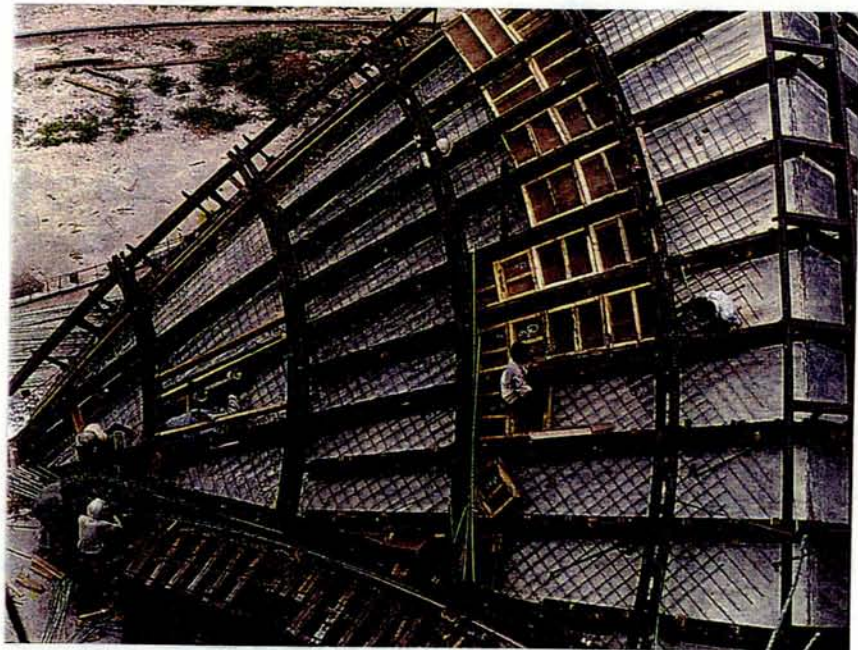
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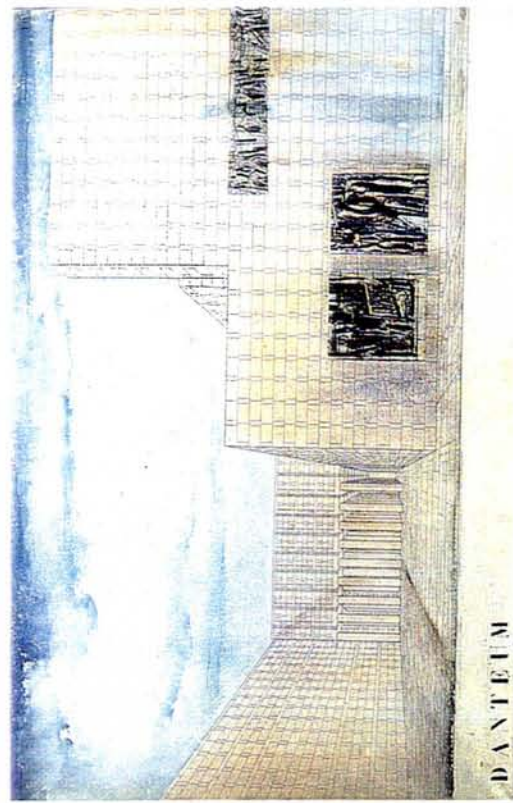
P R E C E D E N T S

Next comes taht valley words cannot express,
The Vale of Poverty and Nothingness:
Here you are lame and deaf, the mind has gone
You enter an obscure oblivion.
When sunlight penetrates the atmosphere
A hundred thousand shadows disappear,
And when the sea arises what can save
The patterns on the surface of each wave?
The two worlds are those patterns, and in vain
Men tell themselves what passes will remain.
Whoever sinks within this sea is blest
And in self-loss obtains eternal rest;
The heart that would be lost in this wide sea
Disperses in profound tranquility,
And if it should emerge again it knows
The secret ways in which the world arose.
The pilgrim who has grown wise in the Quest,
The sufi who has weathered every test,
Are lost when they approach this painful place
And other men leave not a single trace:
Because all disappear, you might believe
That all are equal (just as you perceive
That twigs and incense offered to a flame
Both turn to powdered ash and look the same).
But though they seem to share a common state,
Their inward essences are separate,
And evil souls sunk in this mighty sea
Retain unchanged their base identity;
But if a pure soul sinks the waves surround
His fading form, in beauty he is drowned-
He is not, yet he is; what could this mean?
It is a state the mind has never seen.

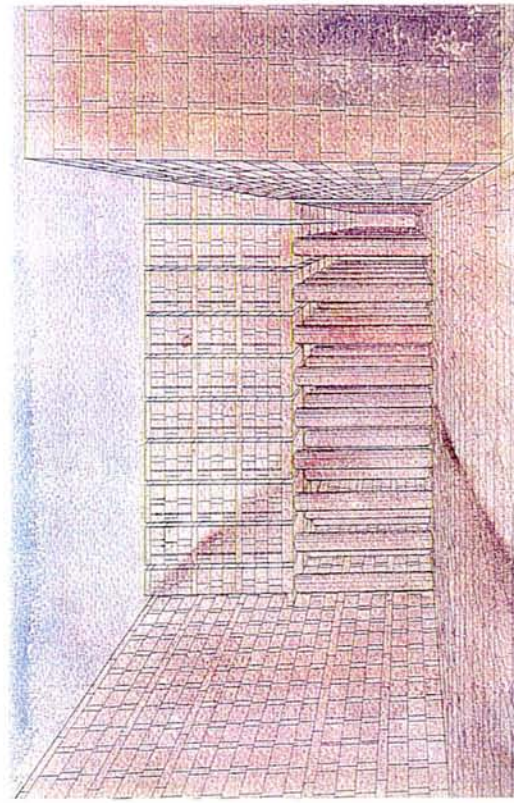
One night that sea of secrets, that loved seer
Of Tous, said to a pupil standing near:
"When you are worn out by love's fierce desp
And in your weakness tremble like a hair,
You will become that hair and take your place
In curls that cluster round the loved one's face
Whoever wastes away for love is made
A hair concealed within those tresses' shade-
But if you will not waste away, your soul
Has made the seven gates of hell its goal."

A frenzied lover wept; a passer-by
Inquired the cause, and this was his reply:
"They say that when at last the Lord appears,
He will receive, for forty thousand years,
The men who are deserving in this place;
Then from that summit of celestial grace
They will return and know themselves once more
Bereft of light, the poorest of the poor.
I will be shown myself - I weep to think
That from such heights to such depths I must sit
I have no need of my identity-
I long for death: what use is 'I' to me?
I live with evil while my Self is here;
With God both Self and evil disappear.
When I escape the Self I will arise
And be as God; the yearning pilgrim flies
From this dark province of mortality
To Nothingness and to Eternity.
And though, my heart, you bid the world farew
To cross the bridge that arches over hell,
Do not despair - think of the oil-lamp's glow
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Its oil is changed and what was there before
The shining flame flared up exists no more.
So you, my quaking heart, when you endure
These threatening flames, will rise up rare and

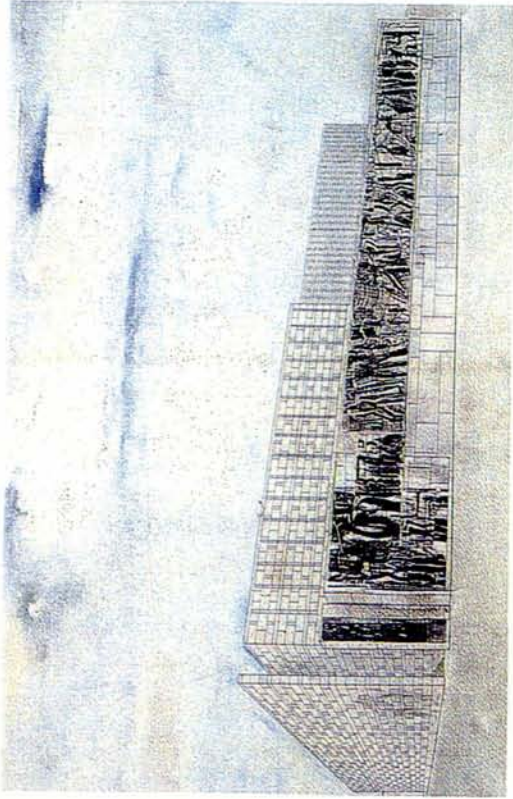
First put aside the Self, and then prepare
To mount Boraq and journey through the air;
Drink down the cup of Nothingness; put on
The cloak that signifies oblivion-
Your stirrup is the void; absence must be
The horse that bears you into vacancy.
Destroy the body and adorn your sight
With kohl of insubstantial, darkest night.
First lose yourself, then lose this loss and then
Withdraw from all that you have lost again-
Go peacefully, and stage by stage progress
Until you gain the realms of Nothingness;
But if you cling to any worldly trace,
No news will reach you from that promised place



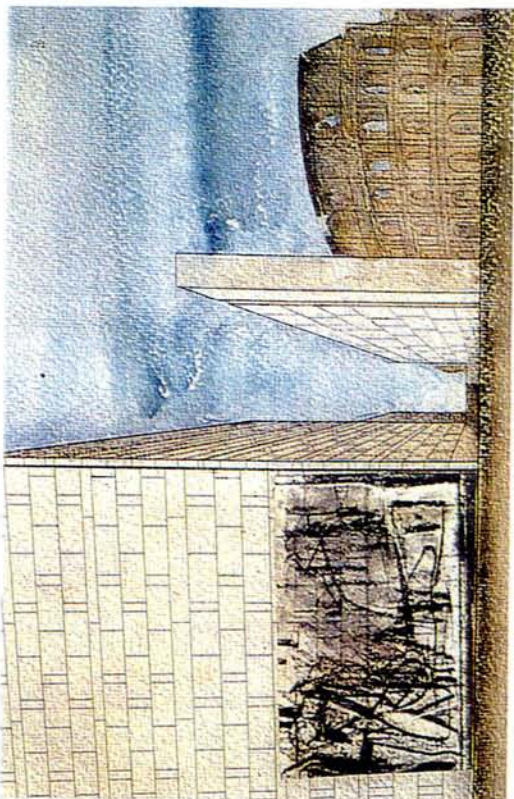
V



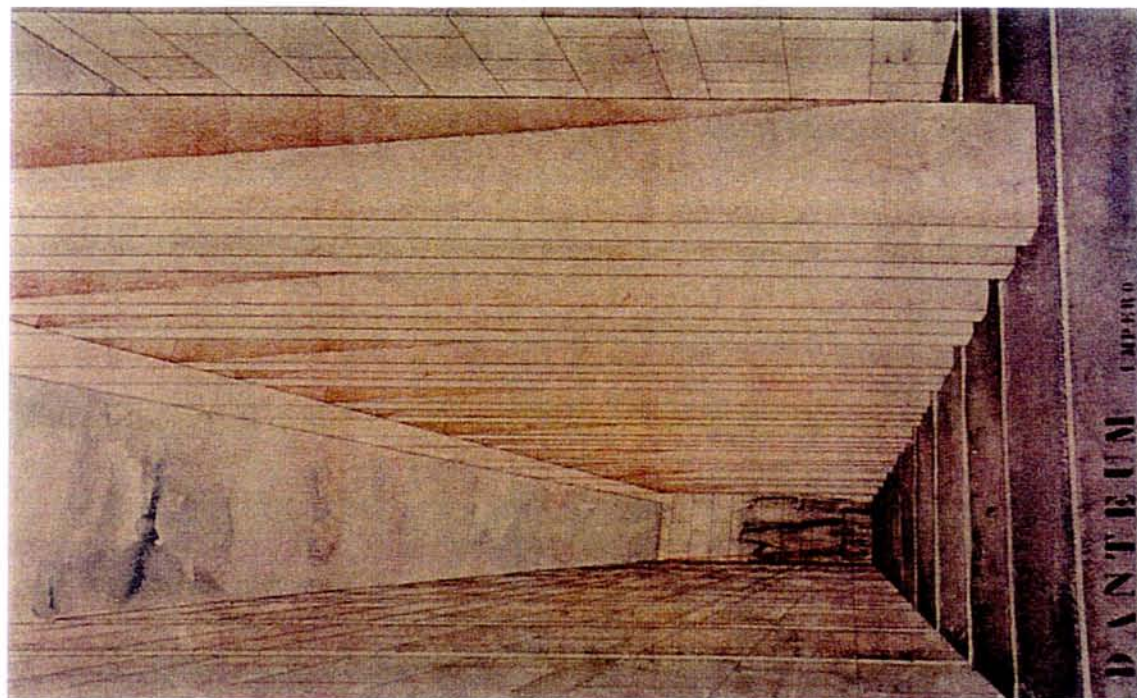
VI



III

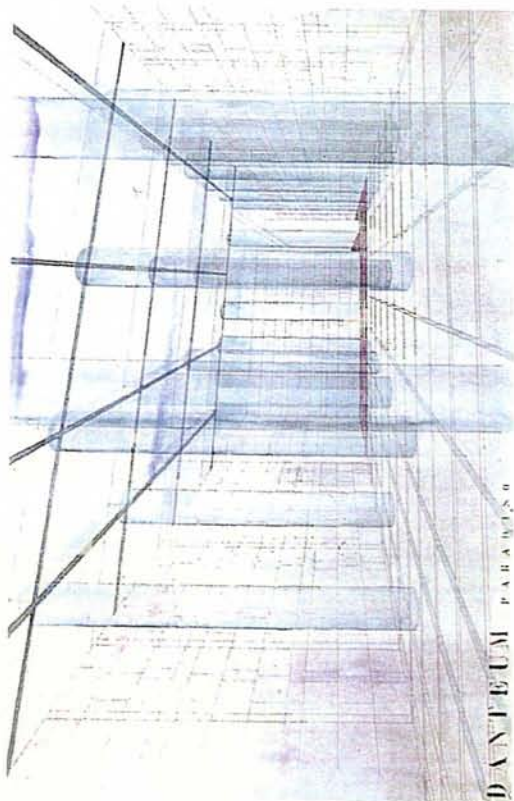


IV



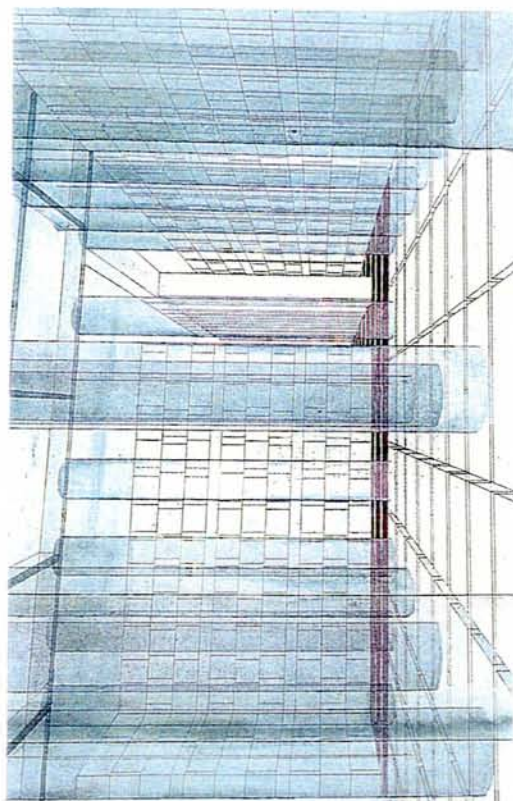
DANTEUM
LIBRO

XII



DANTEUM
PARA VISION

X



XI

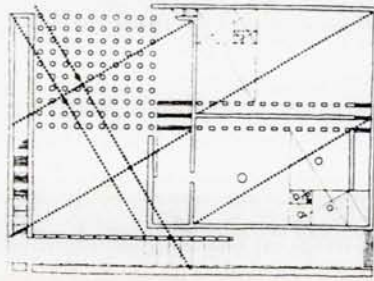


FIG. 94. Danteum, breakdown of golden-section rectangles.

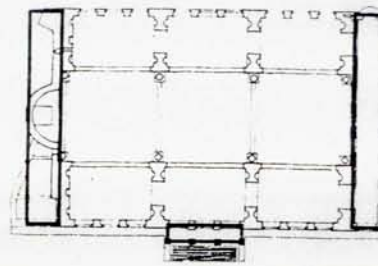


FIG. 95. Basilica of Maxentius, end zones.

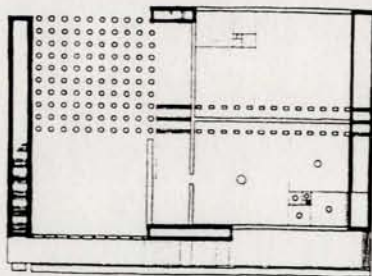


FIG. 90. Basilica of Maxentius. Overlapping squares.

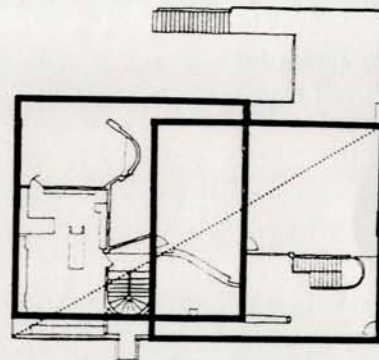


FIG. 91. Danteum, initial phase of the displacement.

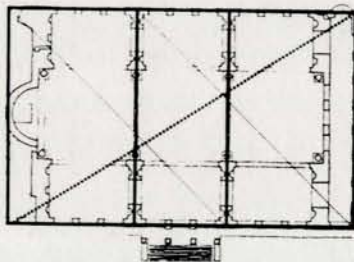


FIG. 92. Danteum, second shift.

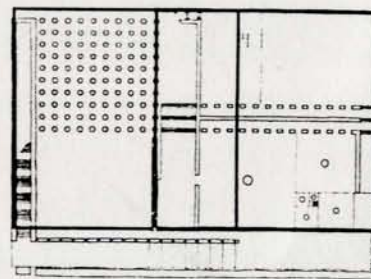
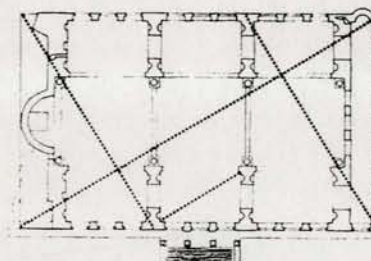
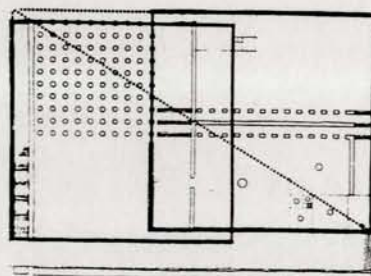
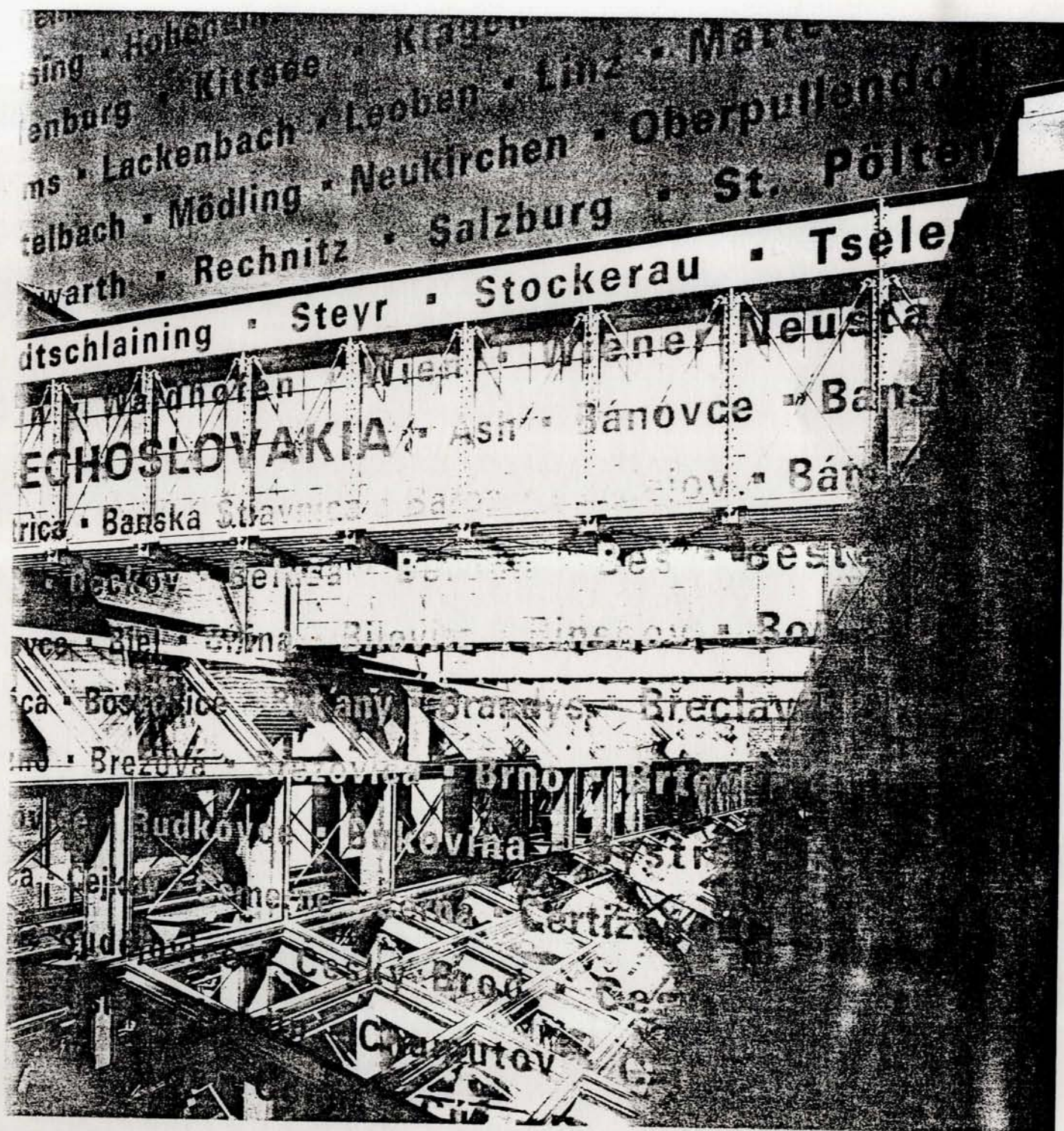
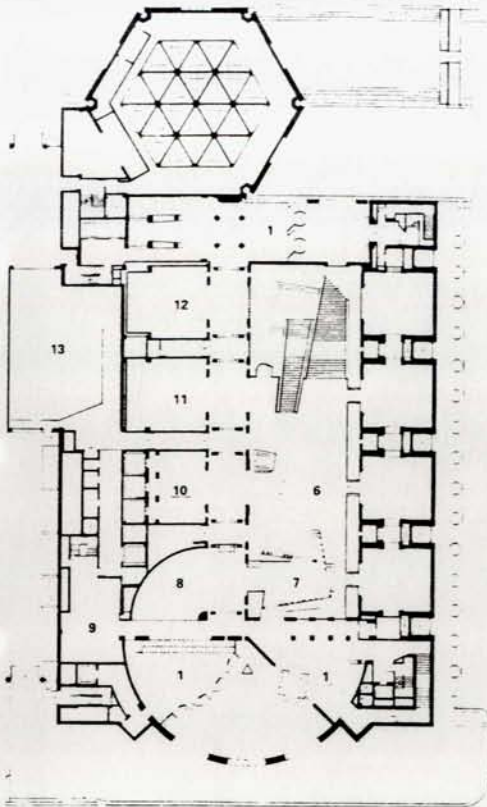


FIG. 93. Basilica of Maxentius, breakdown of golden section rectangles.

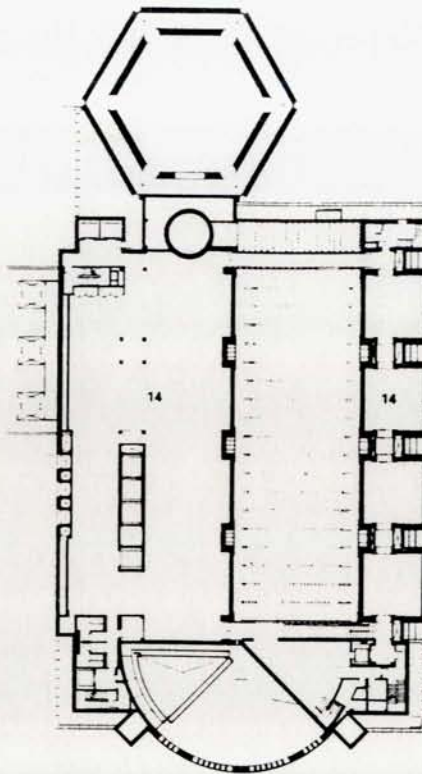






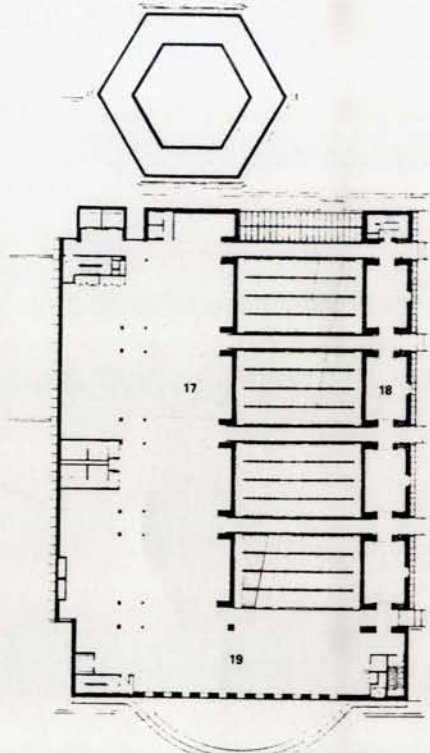
FIRST/MAIN FLOOR

- 1 LOBBY
- 2 THEATER
- 3 EDUCATION/CONFERENCE CENTER
- 4 CLASSROOMS



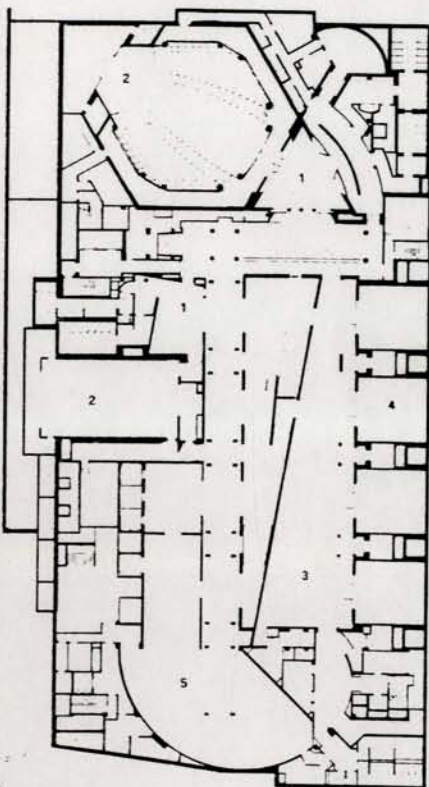
THIRD FLOOR

- 5 TEMPORARY EXHIBITION SPACES
- 6 HALL OF WITNESS
- 7 WALL OF NATIONS
- 8 HALL OF FLAGS
- 9 BOOKSTORE
- 10 ELEVATOR LOBBY
- 11 COATROOM
- 12 LOUNGE



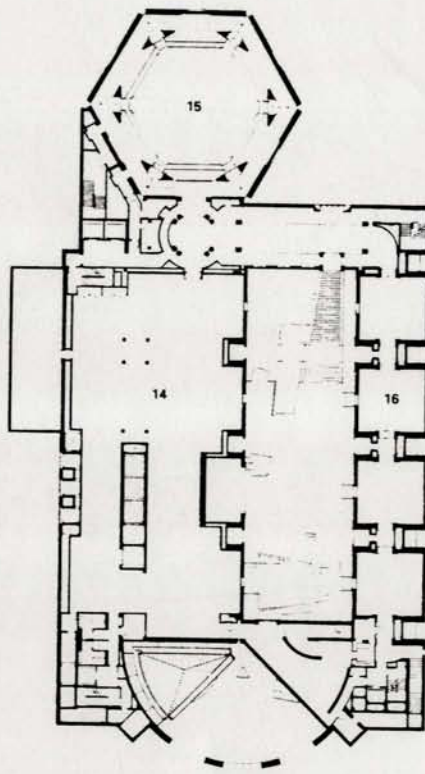
FIFTH FLOOR

- 13 LOADING
- 14 PERMANENT EXHIBITION SPACES
- 15 HALL OF REMEMBRANCE
- 16 LEARNING CENTER
- 17 LIBRARY/ARCHIVES
- 18 CENTRAL RESEARCH HALL
- 19 ADMINISTRATION

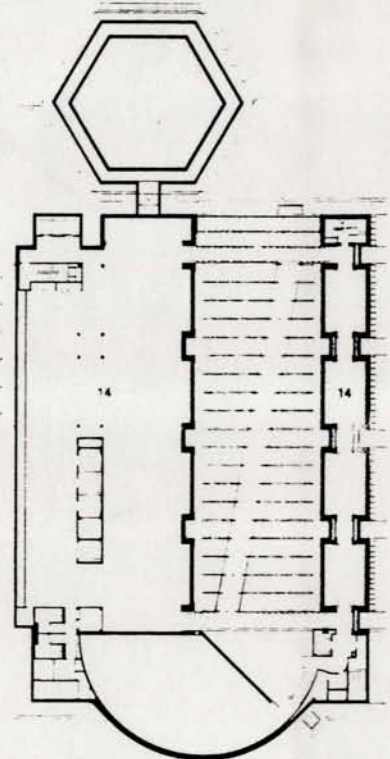


CONCOURSE LEVEL

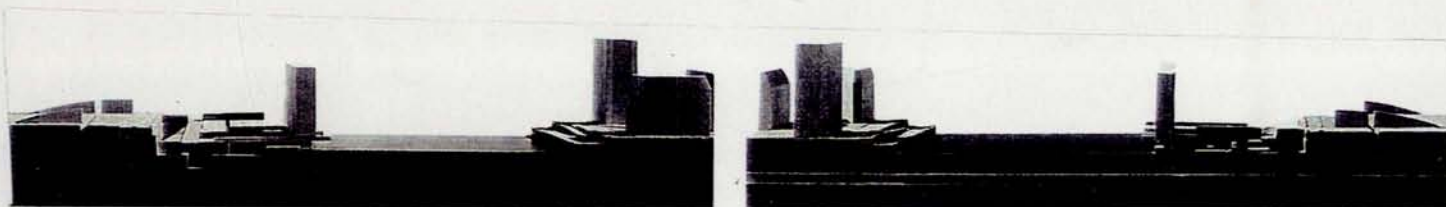
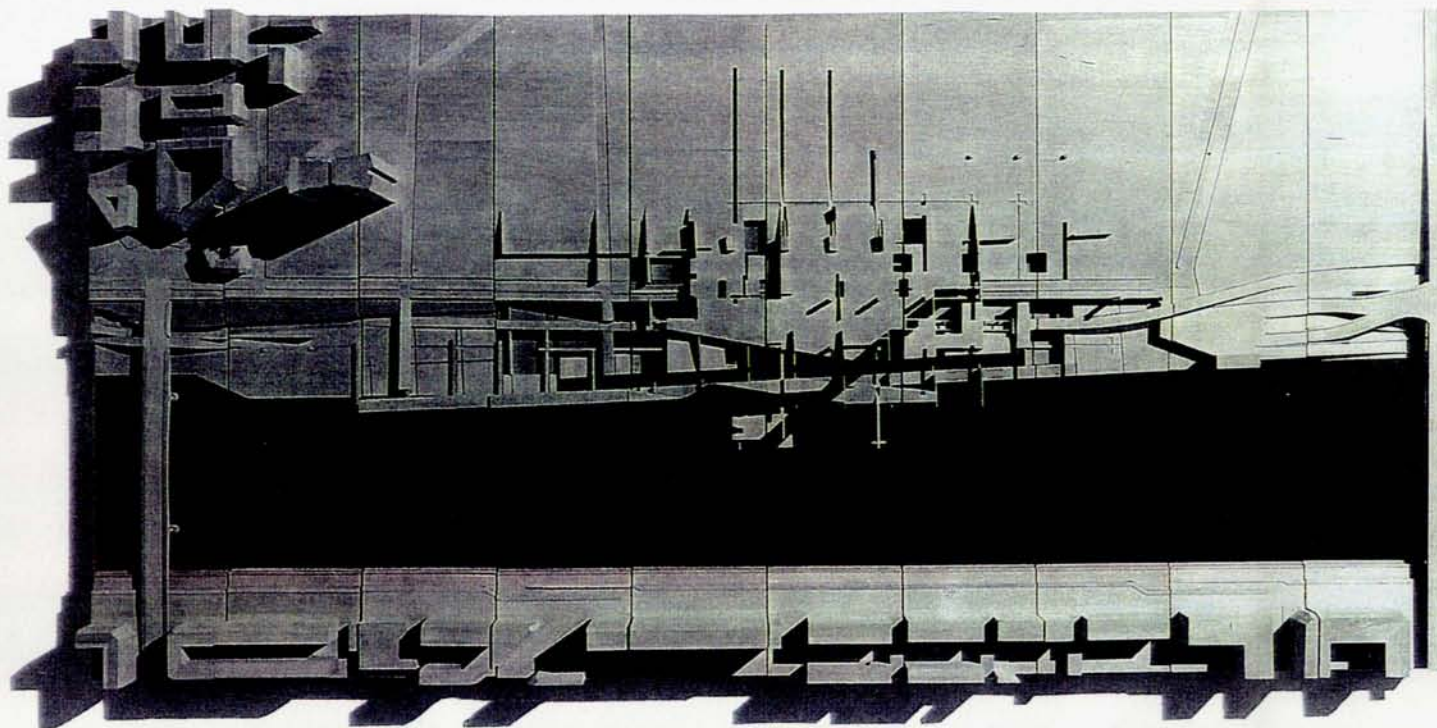
N 40/12m

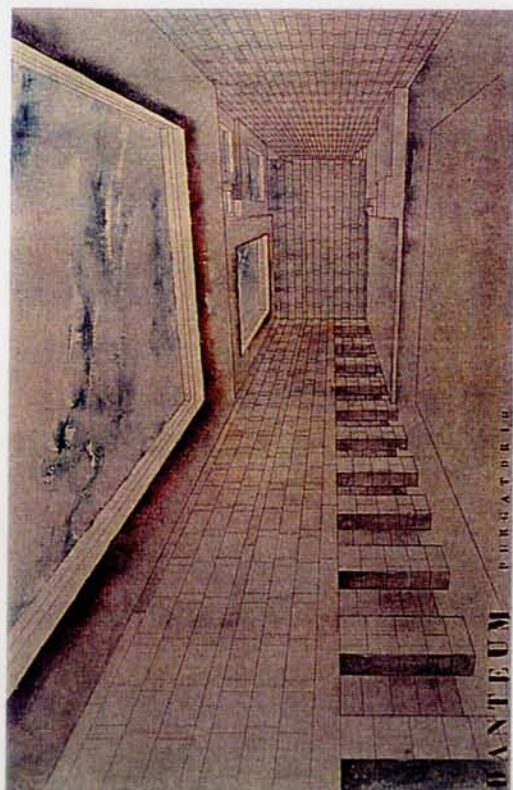


SECOND FLOOR

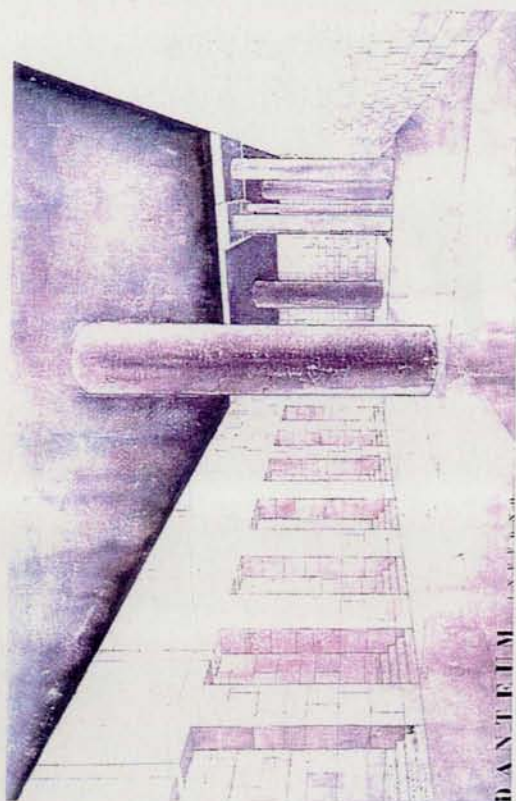


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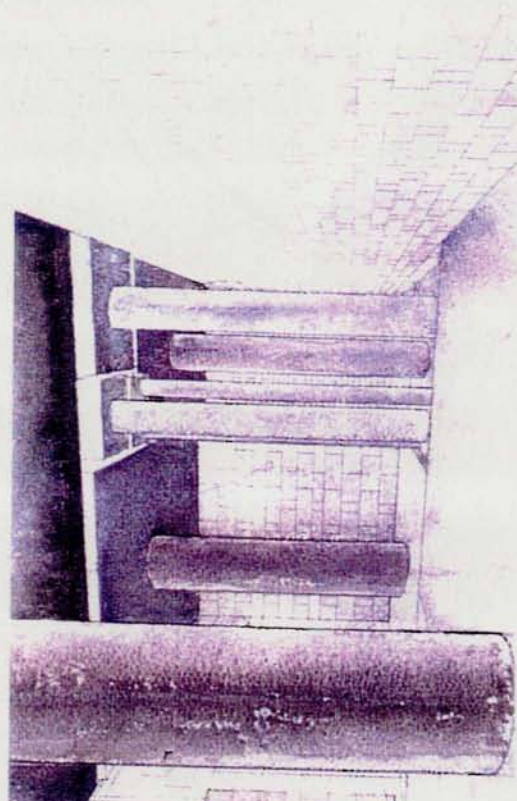




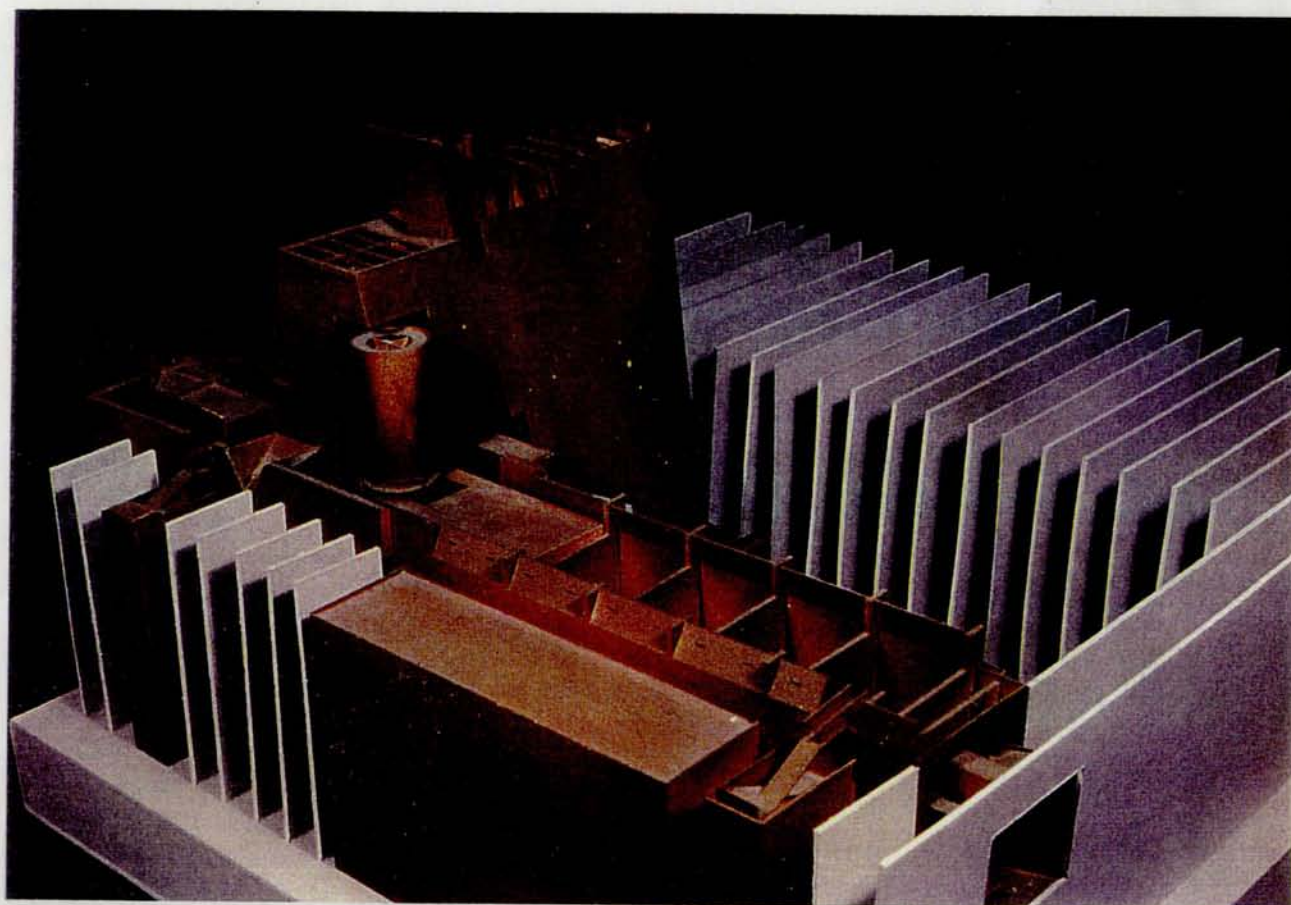
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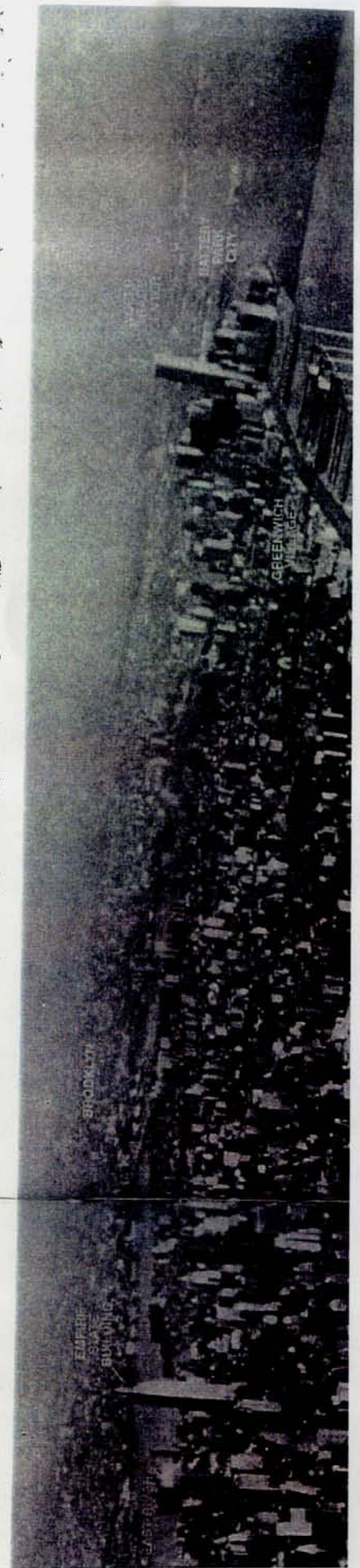
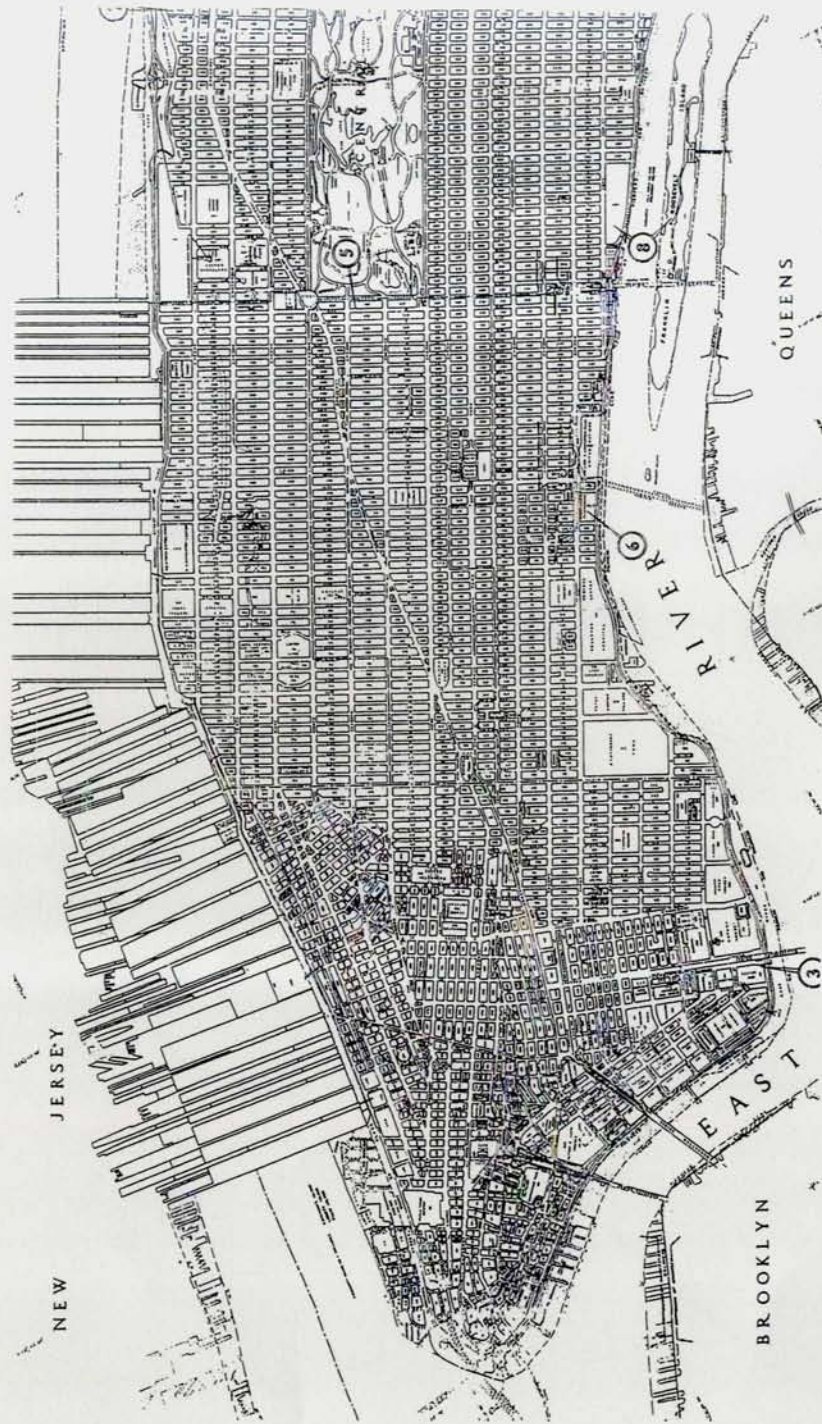


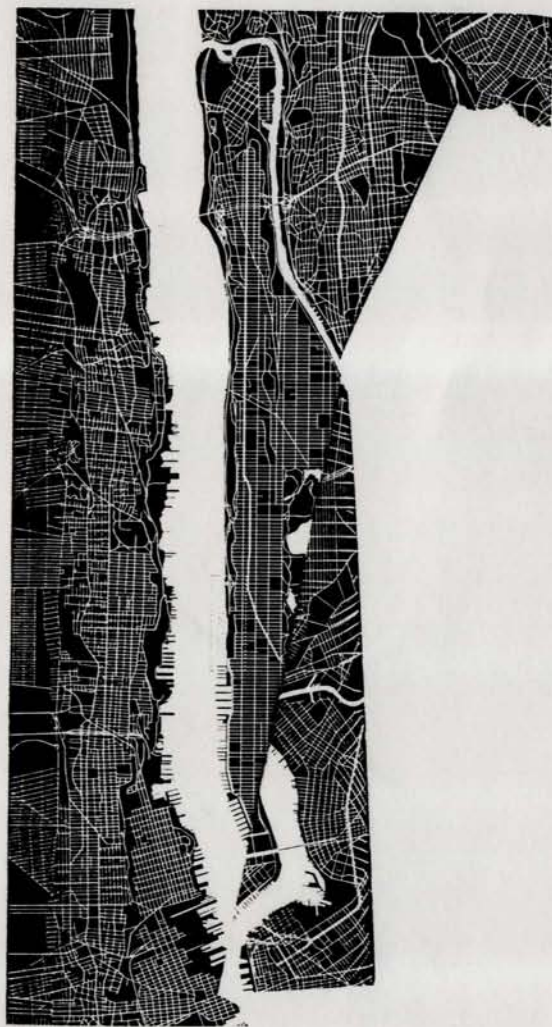
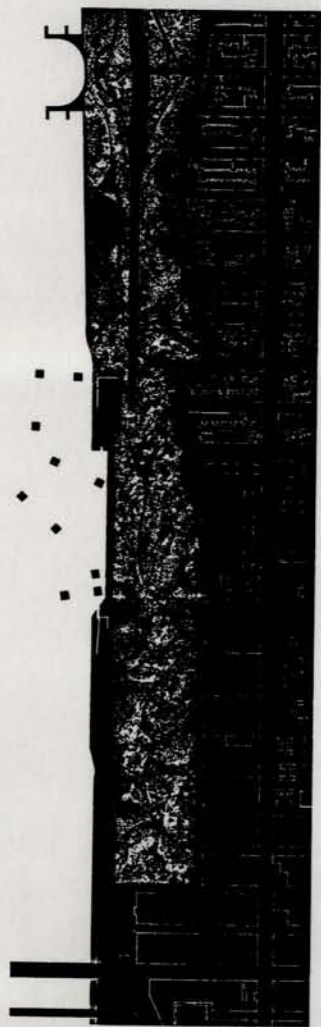
VII



VIII

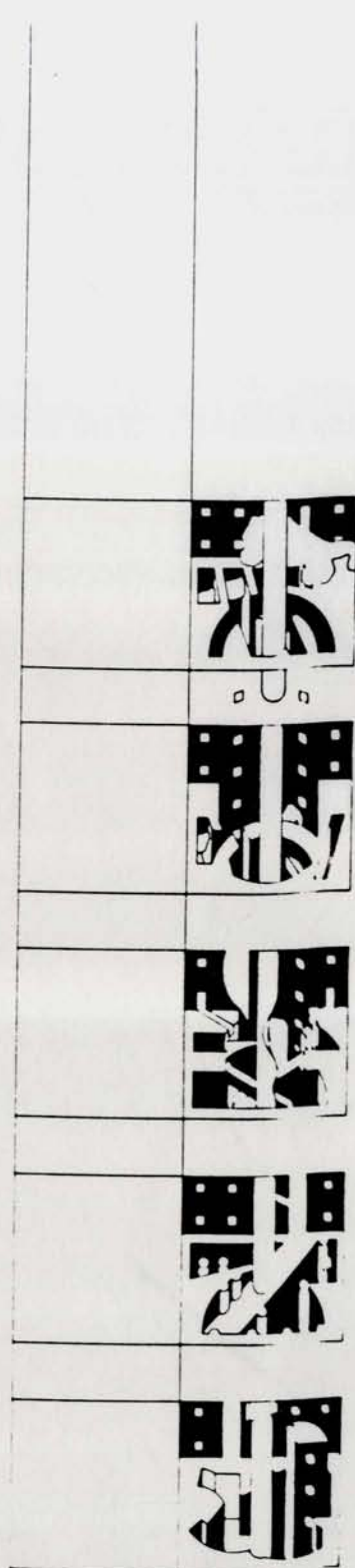
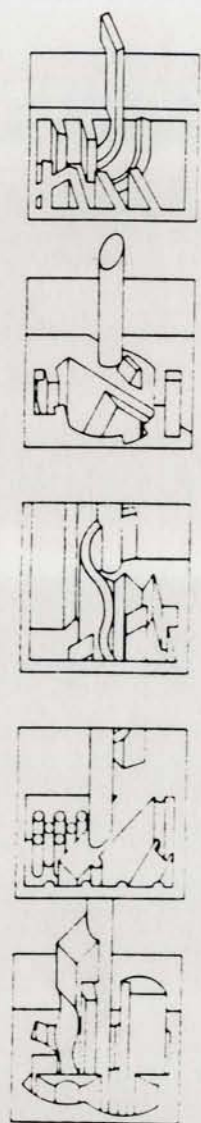


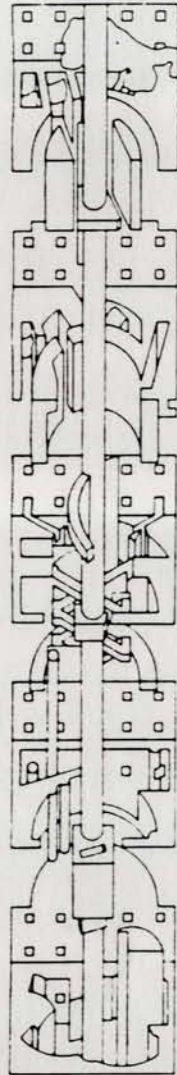


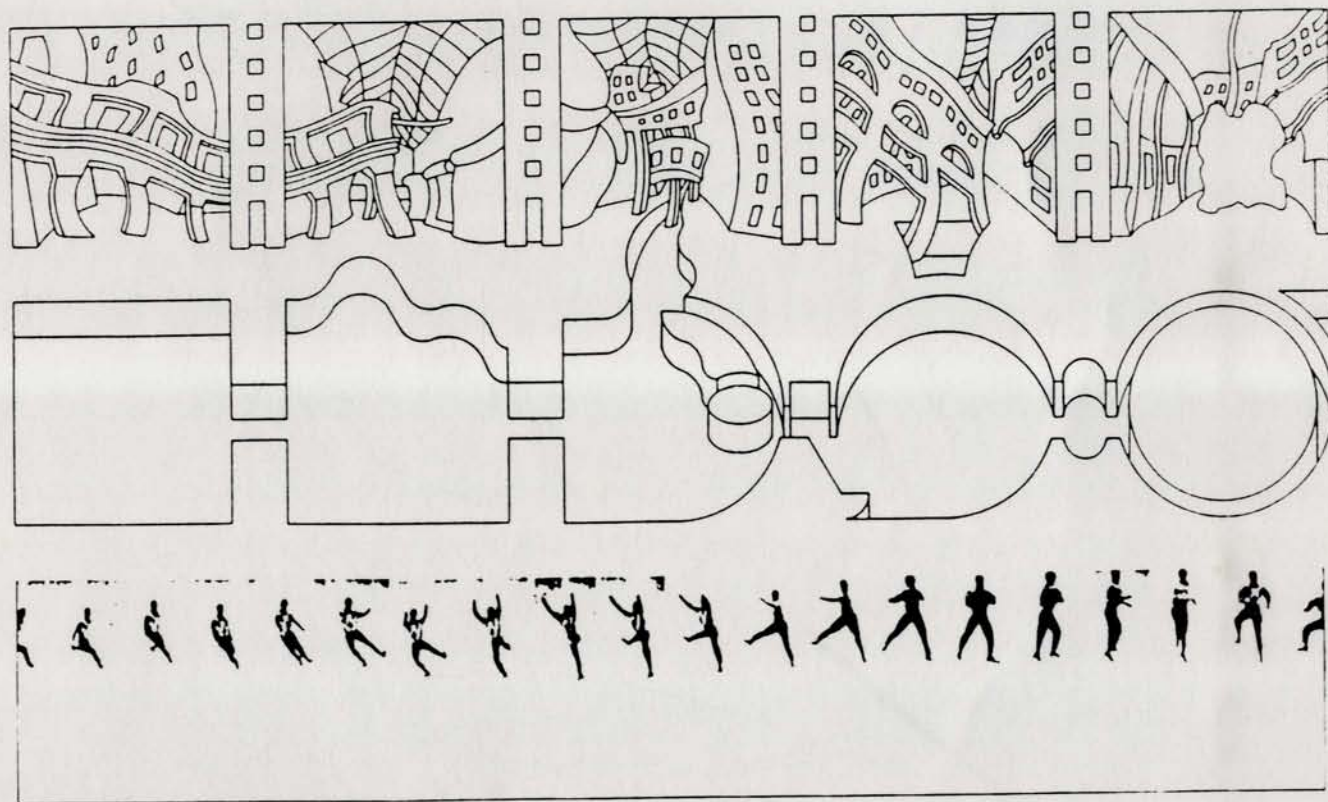


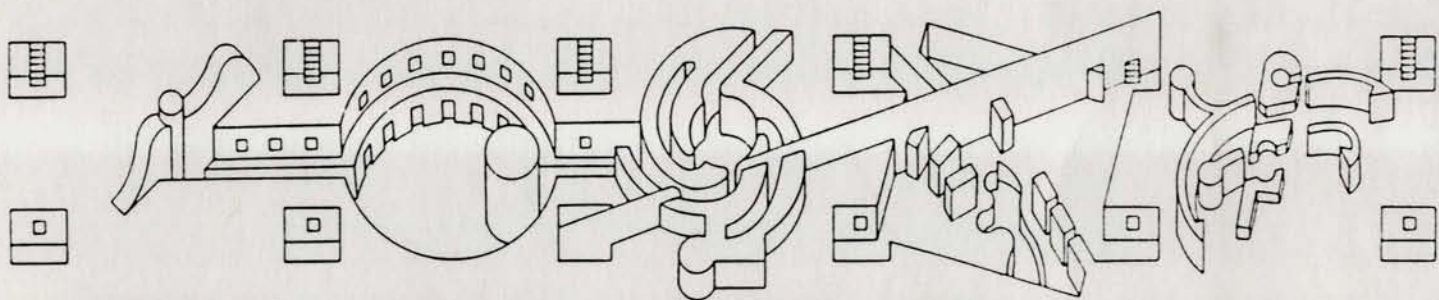
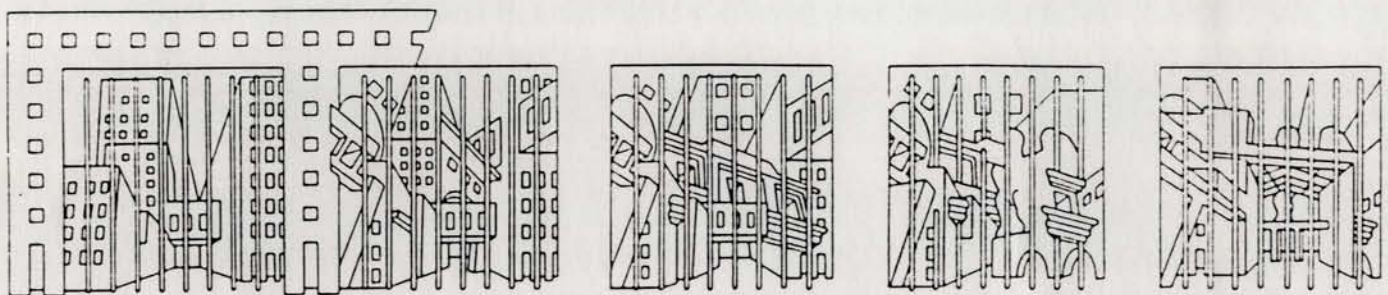
Below
Cleveland site map with "stitches"
Facing page, left
Chessman Dam, Colorado
Facing page, right
Model of hybrid dam











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